No. 8 ● FEBRUARY 1986 ISSN 0206—1473

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW IMPULSE FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS

EUROPE: EAST-WEST ECONOMIC LINKS

THE COMMUNISTS OF THE RUHR

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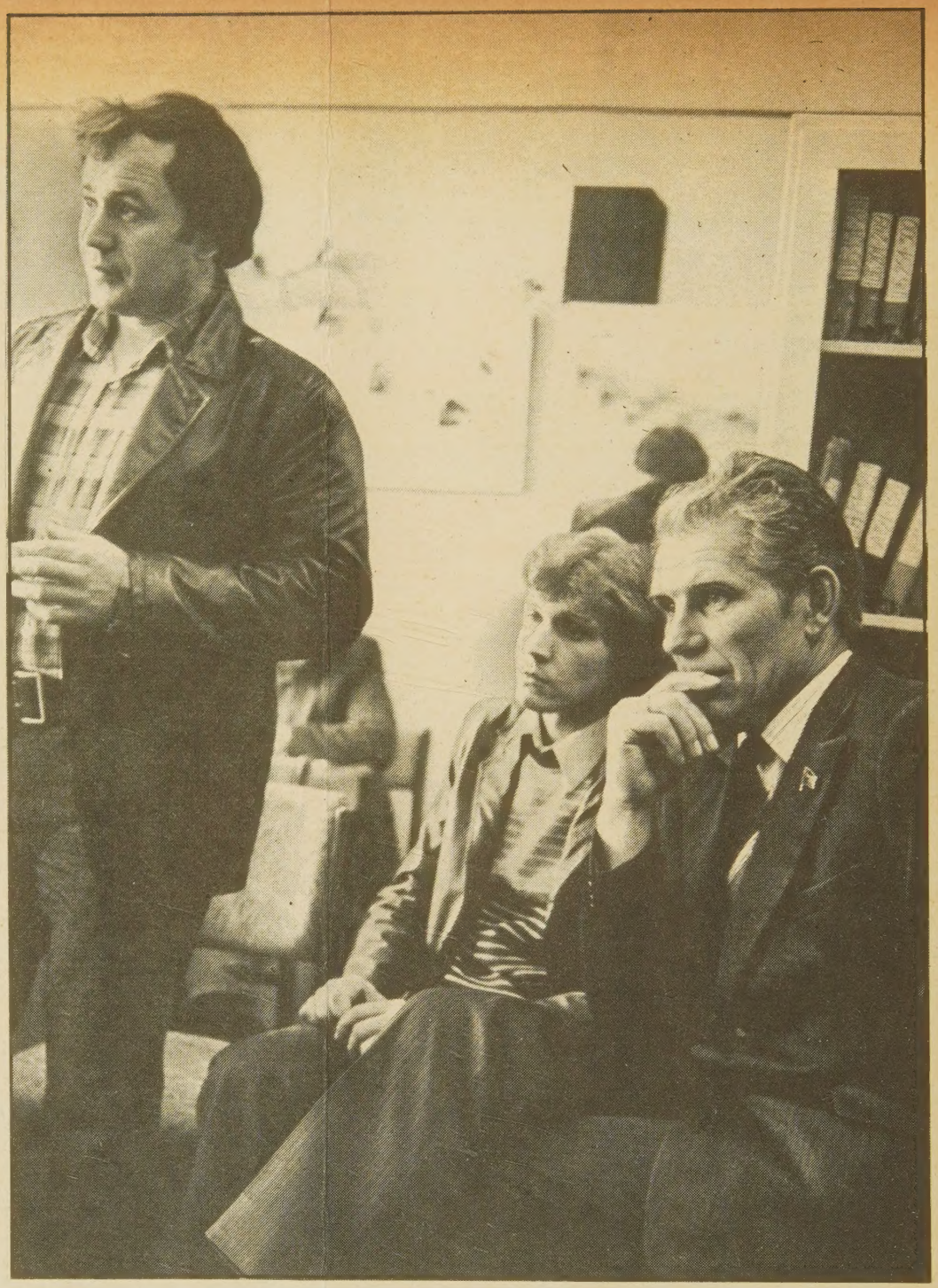
TIME, FORWARD!

THE SOVIET UNION ON THE EVE OF THE CONGRESS OF THE LENINIST PARTY



The preparations for the 27th Congress of the CPSU are nearing completion. On February 25 delegates of the Party organizations of all the republics, territories and regions of our country will gather in Moscow. Among them will be U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet Deputy Victor Pushkaryov, a grinding-mill team leader at a Moscow computer factory.

This picture was taken during an eve-of-congress Party meeting at the factory. Matters of principle were being discussed. What thoughts ran through the mind of the veteran worker and long-standing Party member as he listened to his younger comrade?

The pre-congress period is a time for reflection, quest and action. There are no simple problems, each demands a thoughtful approach.

The public and the private, the collective and the individual, what belongs to the people as a whole and what belongs to me. These are problems that are approached differently by people in different parts of the world, depending on the level of development of the society in which they live. Social justice, the underlying idea of socialism, makes it possible to pose any problem directly and clearly and to resolve it in the interests of the whole people. This is the social ideal. But between the ideal and its full embodiment in practice there always lies an interval of time of varying duration devoted to a search for the optimal ways of achieving the objective. With the best of intentions, people engaged in this search are not guaranteed against mistakes. After all, they are trailblazers. In the socialist society thorough, nationwide discussion of the tasks to be tackled, open and constructive criticism of shortcomings help to rectify mistakes in good time. The democracy inbuilt in the socialist system is thus steadily perfected.

Our country has now reached a turning point, a time for self-critical examination of the preceding period of development. A time of change. The masses are displaying greater initiative than before. People not faced with the problems of capitalist society—hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, social insecurity for the majority—people who with their own hands have created and are steadily improving a new social system, are ever less tolerant of shortcomings and are fully determined to overcome them, to get rid of outdated fossilized notions, inertia, bureaucracy, self-interest—all that impedes movement ahead.

Victor Pushkaryov, like the entire Soviet people, expects the 27th Congress to adopt important decisions, to give a new powerful impetus to the development of our country, to raise socialist social relations to a higher level, to broaden socialist democracy.

Photo
by Y. Inyakin

BEFORE THE CONGRESS

Have you wondered why the political editor of the French Communist paper L'Humanité asked the CPSU General Secretary whether the current period in the Soviet Union's history is as responsible as the period ushered in by the October Revolution, and whether there is not reason to speak of a "new revolution?" The question is in itself, we feel, indicative of the attention the Soviet state and the Communist Party are commanding worldwide on the eve of the 27th Congress.

Party congresses have tackled crucial, truly historic objectives on many previous occasions. Today our Party is to assess the full implications of and, what is more, meet the challenge our epoch poses it and the whole of Soviet society. The country already felt the need for this after the CPSU plenary meeting last April. Urgent day-to-day affairs may have overshadowed, for some of us, the contribution of our nation's economic and social development to the solution of the cardinal problems facing mankind. Lenin's idea that socialism will influence the world primarily with its economic policy is well known but there is still much to be done to make this a reality. "The historical destiny of the country, the position of socialism in the modern world," the Party reminded the nation, "largely depend on how we proceed further. By making wide use of the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution and bringing the forms of socialist economic management in conformity with present-day conditions and requirements we must effect a substantial acceleration of our socio-economic progress. This is the only course open to us." These words have found a ready response in all the strata of Soviet society.

The challenge of the present epoch to our country is not confined to home affairs. Man has created means of self-destruction monstrous and sophisticated enough to make self-destruction a tragic reality if outdated methods of tackling international affairs are not discarded. Nevertheless, influential forces of world imperialism still rely on the use of arms. Under these circumstances, the competition between the two social systems assumes a new aspect: which of the systems will offer a way of ensuring self-preservation rather than self-destruction. Votaries of the old social system have already offered one formula: "Better dead than red." To this cynical invitation to atomic death socialist foreign policy opposes the alternative of the 21st century without nuclear weapons, without nuclear deterrents and without the means of mass annihilation.

It is only natural that on the eve of its 27th Congress, the Communist Party should have worked out and announced for all the world to hear its answers to both challenges of the epoch. The first challenge we answer with our programme for the acceleration of socio-economic development; and the second, with our programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

To combat the nuclear threat is becoming increasingly urgent. In his replies to questions from the mayors of the martyr-cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Mikhail Gorbachev wrote of the importance of "immediate action being taken by all." The movement to declare cities, towns and villages non-nuclear zones has now spread worldwide. There are already 900 such zones in Japan, and hundreds, perhaps thousands, in Europe. But isn't it time to start expanding such zones to include whole countries, continents, the planet, and eventually outer space? After all, if space ever becomes a springboard for nuclear attack, all hopes for the reduction of nuclear weapons on earth will be dashed.

So let us use the wonders of technology not to make war but to preserve peace! The reader may reproach us with repeating a statement by Ronald Reagan. But why not quote good words, even if they are those of a political opponent? The trouble is, however, that his good words are followed by dangerous actions that imperil peace.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the congress of the Soviet Communist Party has left no one indifferent the world over. It was not only TV cameras that brought the proceedings in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses to every home. Five thousand delegates discussed questions which, by their very essence, are of immediate and vital concern to every citizen of the Soviet state, to the entire great socialist community of free nations, and for that matter to the world. The Communists of the Soviet Union are prepared to make a worthy contribution to the common effort to attain a better, just society, and lasting peace on Earth and in outer space.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

Let me begin by conveying my greetings to the 27th Congress of the CPSU and wishing the Soviet people every success in accomplishing the tasks of the 12th five-year plan. When I read in the editorial in your issue No. 51 for 1985 what Reagan said to the pupils of a high school in Fallston, Maryland, about "a safer and better future," I could not help thinking of the little American girl Samantha Smith and her hope for a peaceful future. It seems to me all sensible people everywhere in the world hope for a world free of nuclear weapons. That is why of all the pressing problems facing the world today—economic backwardness, hunger, unemployment and regional conflicts—the most urgent of all is the problem of reducing nuclear armaments. The Soviet Union has proposed that such a reduction be started and given good will this problem could indeed be gradually resolved. It is necessary to reduce armaments and not build them up, as is envisioned by the American SDI plan.

UMBERTO CALLA
Pinerolo, Italy

Your Taking Up a Point page not only gives readers an insight into the problems the Soviet Union is tackling. It gives them an idea of the productive social climate in which they are being resolved. There is no room in this climate for empty talk, phrasemongering, and the like. This is very well expressed in an article by Nikolai Shishlin I read in your magazine. Speaking of the sharp criticism of shortcomings the Soviet people are voicing, he writes: "This grass-roots critical faculty, which is now coming to the fore, is an indication of our society's health, of its intolerance of stagnation, of its capacity for new achievements." There is no doubt that in a society where such a climate has been created the initiative of each of its members will be made good use of.

WINFRID NEUBERT
Berlin, G.D.R.

Young people in my country are in full solidarity with the peace initiatives advanced by the Soviet Union. But I know that there are still no few young people in the world who do not understand or even try to understand the policy of socialism. Not long ago I read about an opinion poll taken among American youth. Many young Americans said that in World War II the Soviet Union fought in alliance with the Western powers—on Hitler's side. It did not even occur to them to ask against whom that war was fought. But to work for peace, against the arms race people must be correctly informed about both present and past events.

Preservation of peace is the paramount task of all people. And if this task is approached intelligently and sincerely, the fight for peace will acquire a new, powerful dimension.

EUSILIO BENILDE BRANDAO
Luanda, Angola

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

No. 8, FEBRUARY, 1986

Founded 1943

Editor-in-Chief: MIKHAIL FYODOROV
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CONTENTS

Before the Congress (The Editor's Page) 1
Towards the CPSU Congress
M. Kobrin and V. Tsoppi—**Time, Forward!** 3
Our Own Correspondent—**Article 116** 5
G. Stakh—**Wanted Now: Concrete Decisions** . . . 6
Panorama
V. Grishin—**Korean Peninsula: Pyongyang Sets the Example.** N. Shimmel—**U.S.A.—Pacific: Victims of Neoglobalism.** E. Korshunov—**Libya—Chad: Pincers!** L. Makarevich—**Portugal: Setback for the Right.** B. Asoyan—**South Africa: Failed Salvage Bid.** N. Reshetnyak—**Uganda: Beginnings of Change.** D. Zgersky—**Iran—Iraq: No Victors** 8
D. Volsky and P. Davydov—**Syria: Energy and Dynamism** 13
Notes ● Remarks 16
O. Bogomolov—**Europe: Prospects for Economic Cooperation** 18
Ilie Vaduva (People on the World Scene) 20
W. Miller—**Soviet-American Trade Relations: The Need for an Initiative** (Point of View) 21
A. Tolpegin—**F.R.G.: Hope Street, Ruhr Valley** . . . 22
A. Butenko—**From the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to Socialist Self-Government** (Problems and Opinions) 24
Y. Gavrilov and S. Tarasov—**Afghanistan: A Turk's Close-Up of the Dushmans** 26
A. Krasikov—**Spain: In the Shadow of NATO** . . . 28
V. Godyna—**Taking Up a Point** 31
Postscript 32

The acceleration of the socio-economic progress of the U.S.S.R. and the elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000 are being discussed by Soviet Communists at the 27th Congress of the CPSU. See pp. 3-5 for an account of the atmosphere that prevailed in the country on the eve of the Party forum.

Design by A. Garanin
Publisher: Trud, Moscow
Published in Russian, English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish and Czech
EDITORIAL OFFICE:
Pushkin Square, Moscow, GSP, 103782, U.S.S.R.
Telephones: **229-88-72, 209-07-67 (Information)**
Telex: **411164a NEWT SU, 411164b NEWT SU, 411164c NEWT SU**
Cables: **NEW TIMES PUSHKIN SQUARE MOSCOW**
Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

TIME, FORWARD!

MIKHAIL KOBRIN and VICTOR TSOPPI

The 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union opens in Moscow on Tuesday, February 25. It is called upon to give unprecedented impetus to the advance of the Soviet society along the highroad of development onto which the Bolshevik Party of Leninist revolutionaries led our country nearly 70 years ago.

"The October Revolution," CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev said in his recent interview to L'Humanité, "is a turning point in the history of our country, an event that for its significance and impact on the development of all humanity has no equal in the past. But it is not enough to carry out a revolution; it must also be upheld, the workingman's concepts of equality and justice, his social and moral ideals, must be translated into life. In other words, a new society that can ensure a life worthy of man must be built." The 27th Congress is to be a milestone on the way to this truly great goal.

* * *

The months of preparatory work for the congress have shown that the Soviet Communists, backed by the entire people, are firmly resolved to make full use of the vast theoretical, political and practical experience of the Leninist Party, to verify their plans and actions by it, and without clinging to fossilized dogmas and concepts, to pave the way to the coming century.

The pre-congress period has been a memorable one—a time of summing up, of new hopes. We have eagerly followed the press, listened with keen interest to the pronouncements of Party and government leaders, read with unflagging attention the accounts of Party meetings and conferences and the congresses of the Communist parties of the Union Republics. We have actively discussed the drafts of programme documents, measuring them against our own experience, the performance of our own work collectives and the prospects for the country as a whole. We have all been conscious of the life-giving winds of change and surged forward to meet them.

The annual reporting and election meetings of Party organizations of which the congress will be the culmination have shown that only by a new approach to the solution of the problems that have arisen and continue to arise can full scope be given to the creative initiative of the masses, that paramount factor in the policy of social and economic acceleration proclaimed by the Party. A profound awareness of this has been manifest in the high degree of activity displayed by the Party members and their keen sense of involvement in resolving the problems of today and in the shaping of things to come. The local organizations of the CPSU alone have put forward more than three million critical observations and proposals, which have merged in a single stream of collective creative thinking. More than 100 million industrial and office workers, collective farmers, scientific, literary and art workers have taken part in the pre-congress discussion of the draft of the Main Guidelines for the economic and social development of the U.S.S.R. in 1986-90 and for the period up to the year 2000.

Looking back over the years that have passed since the establishment of Soviet power we see with satisfaction that a good groundwork for further advance has been laid. This historically brief span of time has been for the peoples of our country a period of epochal dimensions. The Land of Soviets has risen from age-old backwardness to the heights of social progress, registered signal accomplishments in all spheres of life, become a great power exerting a decisive influence on all areas of international life. The main achievement, as the draft of the new text of the CPSU Programme states, is the "final and complete victory of socialism in our country."

The years since the previous, 26th CPSU Congress, for instance, were not wasted. National income increased by 17 per cent, and the volume of industrial production went up by one fifth. The average annual gross agricultural output increased by 6 per cent. And the per capita real income rose by 11 per cent.

But we would not be Communists were we not to take a realistic view of the magnitude of the still untapped reserves of socialism; were we not to expose the negative phenomena that have emerged in the course of our development.

Some of the difficulties we have encountered were objective: adverse demographic patterns caused by war losses, severe crop failures, devastating natural calamities. We also had to cope with the consequences of voluntarism which opened the way to ill-considered decisions and harebrained schemes, and of the extolling of individual leaders, which engendered a mood of complacency, indifference, inertia.

As has been pointed out repeatedly in the pre-congress discussion, these adverse phenomena were among the causes of the failure of the state economic mechanism to react in time and adequately to the unfavourable trends in the economy of the 70s and the early 80s. The conditions were not created for bringing the management structure into line with the qualitatively new opportunities opened by scientific and technological progress. Full use was not made of the human factor.

Although there was no quantitative decline and we continued to forge ahead step by step, the growth rates dropped. In all the basic areas of the economy they were lower during the ninth five-year-plan period than during the eighth, and in the tenth, lower than in the ninth.

That is why in the pre-congress discussion the accent has been placed not only on our achievements—which, we repeat, are obvious—but on criticism of all that has outlived its time, all that impedes our progress towards the full realization of the socialist ideals—genuine social justice and the ever fuller satisfaction of the material and spiritual requirements of the people.

In a frank, nationwide discussion of this kind we see the way to cleansing our society of the retrogrades and windbags, bureaucrats and moneygrubbers parasitizing on its living organism. And this has to be done, as Lenin said, "not fearing to admit the evil, but desiring to expose and pillory it and to stimulate thought, will, energy and action to combat it."

The discussion everywhere—in the local or central press, at factories or research institutes, at meetings of local Party groups or at congresses of the Communist parties of the Union Republics—is pervaded by determination to press forward, a feeling that what has been achieved is not enough, a striving to move ahead faster and more effectively.

The example here was set, and befittingly, by the Communists of the Soviet

capital. Discarding yesterday's yardsticks, going by which there might have seemed to be no need to worry about the way things were, they, in the Bolshevik manner, assessed their performance by the criteria of tomorrow's far bigger and more complex tasks. This approach taken at the Moscow city Party conference fully reflected the spirit of the April 1985 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, which highlighted the crucial significance of the new stage of history entered by the Party and the nation.

Sharp criticism of negative phenomena—superficiality, formalism, eyewash, moneygrubbing, all attempts to make things look better than they really are—has resounded these past weeks at all Party meetings. In effect this criticism has been a vote of no confidence in functionaries that have failed to pass the test, those who have violated the norms of Party life, and in some cases transgressed the law. In Uzbekistan, for instance, ten of the republic's thirteen first secretaries of regional Party committees were removed from their posts.

The functionaries who have not measured up to requirements have been replaced with competent leaders, Communists possessing a keen sense of the new and dedicated not in words but in deeds to our ideals. New incumbents have been also named to head a number of key ministries.

The Communists, indeed all Soviet people, welcome the changes. They realize that without breaking away from the fetters of outdated notions we cannot hope to give effect to the grand programme put forward by the Party leadership—a programme that envisages nearly doubling the national income in the remaining 15 years of the century, at least doubling the volume of industrial output and fully satisfying the country's requirements in agricultural products. In other words, **doubling** in a decade and a half the economic potential created since the inception of Soviet power and elevating Soviet society to a higher level of economic and social progress. This is the highroad to the Party's supreme objective—steady heightening of the material and cultural standards of the people's life.

Though little time has passed since the April 1985 plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, the changes are assuming ever more tangible contours. New content and meaning have been imparted to the familiar words "intensification," "acceleration," "openness," "social justice," and above all, the "human factor." Attention must be focussed on Man, both as the producer of material and spiritual values and as their consumer. This is the leitmotif of what is being said these days.

Conscious of being the true masters in our own house, we have been studying every line, every formulation in the drafts of the programme documents to be put before the congress. And not only studying them, but, without waiting for their adoption, already considering ways of getting off to a good start in the new, 12th five-year-plan period. And the news from the farm fields and factories shows that such a start has been made. The work collectives of the country's leading industrial enterprises are advancing major economic initiatives. The workers, collective farmers and intellectuals are marking the 27th Congress by exemplary work in their respective spheres.

At the same time we must not underestimate the difficulties that will attend the realization of the far-reaching programme for the acceleration of economic and social progress. In this context it is particularly timely to recall Lenin's words: "...the more profound the change we wish to bring about, the more must we rouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards it and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary."

We are well aware that the eyes of the whole world are turned to us at this time. Our friends see in our achievements a stimulus to struggle for a better future for their own peoples. Our enemies, on the other hand, are out to make use of our frank self-criticism to throw more stones into the Soviet garden. But that does not frighten us. Our strength lies precisely in the fact that we speak of our shortcomings boldly and openly and, by analyzing them objectively, are overcoming all that impedes our progress.

* * *

The Soviet people are living, doing and daring not in a vacuum, but in a complex world racked by tragic contradictions and deep anxieties. The human factor is basic also to our foreign policy. For it is human civilization that has created the means of its own self-destruction, even of its instantaneous, total, global extinction. But people want to survive and live.

Human survival cannot be guaranteed by wishful thinking or incantations to exorcize the bomb. Action is needed, concrete, constructive action that takes into account not only our interests but also the interests of our opponents-cum-partners in order to find those areas of international politics where negotiation is possible and agreement can be reached. It is time to discard narrow-minded, stone-age notions, to realize that in this enlightened age war is no solution. Time for a breakthrough in relations between countries and peoples, in thinking and in the practical settlement of international problems, proceeding from the premise that humanity can save humanity.

Today this is no longer a hypothesis. In the Statement by the CPSU General Secretary of January 15, our country offers a detailed, scientifically, technically and politically substantiated plan for completely ridding mankind by the year 2000 of nuclear weapons and hence of the danger of a universal nuclear holocaust. People the world over are talking and thinking about this plan with deep interest and hope, for the life of each and everyone depends on the realization of this plan.

Not a single valid objection to the plan has been raised. True, it has scared well-nigh out of their wits those who have grown accustomed to believing that fear, not common sense, is the only guarantee of peace. That the juggling with nuclear missiles at the edge of the abyss must be continued. That there is no such thing as peaceful coexistence and honest competition, never has been, never will be and never should be. But we think otherwise. For we are Communists, revolutionaries, trailblazers determined to shatter the age-old evils of hatred, prejudice, distrust and enmity. And hence, also of war. And we enter the new century carrying the banner of life for all mankind and for each individual.

Socialism rejects the very idea of hegemonism. Countering the inbuilt hegemonism of imperialism, it brings its influence to bear on a worldwide scale so that the hegemony of reason should at long last triumph on this beautiful planet of ours, should become the norm of life for the rational beings peopling it. This is the strategic objective of our present frontal offensive. It is a very real and perfectly attainable objective, provided of course that one constantly keeps it in his line of vision. It is the main objective, an objective that is truly worth living for and working for.

The road to this great objective is not strewn with roses. There are many obstructions on it, demolished bridges, sloughs and quicksands of mutual misunderstanding.

What is in question is a historical contest between two systems. But should contests necessarily be settled by deadly combat, by bloodshed? Why should the inhabitants of, say, Oklahoma and Siberia be at loggerheads? Yet it is dinned into the head of the Oklahoman day in and day out that those savage Siberians, astride their intercontinental missiles, could burst into his beloved state within the next five minutes to sovietize him, deprive him of his American way of life, the best in the world. So the Oklahoman thinks there is nothing for it but to pay for the "star wars" as his only hope for salvation.

It is noteworthy that the greater the impact worldwide of the Soviet position on the issue of war and peace, the

more florid becomes the rhetoric designed to implant in the mind of the American, and not only the American, man in the street an obsessive belief in his superiority over his contemporaries in the socialist countries, to cultivate in his thinking the conditioned reflexes of fear and distrust, and the instinct of pathological chauvinism.

"Tonight, we look out on a rising America—firm of heart, united in spirit, powerful in pride and patriotism.... In this nation under God the future will be ours, for the future belongs to the free." Thus President Reagan (evidently believing what he was saying). And further: "The United States is the economic miracle, the model to which the world once again turns... But we cannot stop at foothills when Everest beckons..."

But later on from the same speech we learn that "in times of need" it still remains for the American miracle of miracles "to create a ladder of opportunity" not to the summits of Everest, but "to full employment, so all Americans can climb towards economic power and justice on their own."

To build that magic ladder is not so easy. Why? Because "full employment" and "justice" are out of the question for a capitalist country. And not only for this reason, but also because ladder-building is not on its order of the day. Priority is given to war preparations. For, the President says, "the threat from Soviet forces, conventional and strategic, from the increase of espionage and state terror remains great. This is reality. Closing our eyes will not make reality disappear." What about opening one's eyes and seeing that Reagan's "reality" is nothing but a hallucination, the result of auto-suggestion? Is it not high time to open one's eyes to the true reality?

It is indeed time. However, the instinct of anti-Sovietism still predominates among the powers-that-be over there. They know of course that very many Americans have lost all hope of ever being able to reach even the lowest rung of the "ladder of opportunity," to take if only one step up from the depths of poverty, unemployment and despair. They know that few in the world today any longer believe in the American miracle or that imperialism is the bulwark of freedom.

They bomb a block of flats occupied by blacks in Philadelphia. They throw American peace supporters behind bars. They give sanctuary to nazi war criminals. They invade Grenada. All in the name of freedom! They train and arm Somozists with a view to restoring in Nicaragua a fascist regime subservient to Washington. They fly the Haitian butcher Duvalier, who earned the hatred of the whole people, out of Haiti and replace him by a military junta. This too is called freedom! They use terror tactics and provocation against Libya. They send mercenaries into Afghanistan to kill women and children and to blow up schools and hospitals. They cooperate with the racist rulers of South Africa. Again freedom!

Today that freedom is assuming truly cosmic dimensions. The Strategic Defence Initiative is designed to give the leading imperialist power a completely free hand to order the destinies of all mankind with total impunity. The intention is, by hanging a Damoclean "shield" over our heads, to divert History from its course into a blind alley where its onmarch would be brought to a dead stop forever. No amount of rhetoric, no amount of hypocrisy can camouflage the substance of the sinister hegemonistic, terroristic and anti-humanistic design of the neoglobalists.

Could the Soviet Union stand aloof in this truly extraordinary, indeed, emergency situation? It could not. In submitting for worldwide consideration its clear-cut, thoroughly considered plan for nuclear disarmament and for the removal of the deadly threat to all life on Earth, our country proceeded primarily from the human factor. From the fact that everyone wants to live. And we want everyone to live.

A bitter struggle will have to be waged to prevent the realization of the "star wars" plan and to give effect to the plan for "star peace." We shall have to debate, discuss, argue, explain, substantiate our case with the utmost patience. We are ready to do this. A country which at birth proclaimed "Peace to the Peoples!" will remain true to this vow.

* * *

The Soviet Communists go to their congress with firm confidence in their strength and in the knowledge that they are on the right road. Time is repeatedly putting to the test our steadfastness, our endurance, and our dedication to our chosen ideals. We have passed these tests. Today we are tackling new, revolutionary tasks placed on the order of the day by our Party, by life itself.

Time, forward!

■

F.R.G.

ARTICLE 116

When the Bundestag is not in session deputies usually leave Bonn. However, this time they had to return posthaste for an emergency session. Helmut Kohl's cabinet sought to push through a bill modifying Article 116 of the job-promotion law. On February 5 the bill had its first reading and is now to come into force on May Day. What sort of holiday gift is it to be for the working people?

Only recently few in the F.R.G. knew what Article 116 was. However, now it is at the focus of domestic politics. The article provides, in certain cases, for unemployment benefit, or compensation for a shorter working day, for employees indirectly affected by strike action. If workers at one plant withdraw their labour and the owners of others in the same industry retaliate with lockouts, personnel thus laid off can, as things stand, obtain relief from the Federal Labour Office to which, incidentally, they make monthly contributions from their wages. The law has operated for 17 years.

Why is it now to be modified with such urgency?

Christian Schmidt, a Bundestag deputy from the Green Party, described the ruling coalition's bill as "an act of revenge" for the 1984 strike. As you will remember, metal and print workers had called for a shorter working week but without any loss of pay. The trade unions believed that this was essential to provide more jobs and alleviate unemployment. Some 50 thousand took industrial action for several weeks with material support from the unions. The unions, however, could not maintain a further 330,000 sacked from other enterprises. Even at the time, the government tried to interpret Article 116 in a way that suited employers, and Heinrich Franke, president of the Federal Labour Office, refused relief to dismissed workers. The unions appealed to the courts, Franke's ruling was found unlawful and relief was paid. Eventually the employers had to concede and partly meet the strikers' demands. In reprisal, however, they instigated the present anti-trade union bill.

In his speech in the Bundestag Minister of Labour and Social Affairs Norbert Blüm claimed that it was simply a matter of clarification and that the proposed changes would not at all infringe on the right to strike. But if the bill is passed, that right will exist only on paper. Employers will be able to use lockouts to stifle strikes at birth, as the unions will quite simply not have enough money to keep them going.

Our Own Correspondent

Bonn

The Gorbachev Statement gives a new impulse to the Geneva, Vienna and Stockholm negotiations on arms limitation and international security

WANTED NOW: CONCRETE DECISIONS

GENNADY STAKH

The comprehensive disarmament plan put forward by the U.S.S.R. has provided favourable conditions for expediting negotiations on the entire range of problems involved in ensuring international security. The character, content, scope and urgency of the Soviet proposals require that these negotiations proceed more dynamically and bring maximum results. The rate of working out practical agreements can no longer be regarded as satisfactory.

The Soviet Union wants the whole disarmament mechanism to be put into action. It suggests an all-out effort towards the historic objective of making the world safe for all.

Called for by the Spirit of Geneva

The Soviet-American talks in Geneva on nuclear and space arms are to play a special part in implementing the programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons before the 20th century is out. It is there that the first and decisive steps must be made. This forum can discuss and, to a considerable extent, put into effect the first stage of the Soviet programme. Moscow is known to have suggested that **within the next 5-8 years the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. reduce by one half the nuclear arms that can reach each other's territory.** The U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., which possess the greatest nuclear potentials, should set an example to others. It will only be fair and reasonable. Such an agreement is possible provided, of course, that **both countries renounce the development, testing and deployment of space strike weapons.** This is not the Soviet Union's precondition, as some in Washington claim. This provision comes from awareness of the causal relationships inevitable in the context of today's military-technological realities. The deployment of strike weapons in space is bound to lead to an uncontrollable escalation of the nuclear arms race.

In the context of the Geneva talks on the first stage of the nuclear disarmament programme, or as a separate measure, the U.S.S.R. suggests an agreement with the U.S. **on stopping all nuclear explosions.** The extension by the Soviet Union of its unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions till March 31 offers an excellent opportunity for starting the nuclear disarmament process without delay. The Soviet Union and the world public are awaiting Washington's reply. Whether the Soviet moratorium becomes a bilateral measure or whether the unique chance is missed depends wholly on Washington.

It stands to reason that the Soviet Union cannot show unilateral restraint indefinitely. What is required of the U.S. is a clear-cut answer—affirmative or negative—to the Soviet move. If Washington refuses to join the moratorium, the U.S.S.R. will have to resume nuclear tests for reasons of national security. After all, the United States, which had in any case carried out many more nuclear explosions than the U.S.S.R., went ahead with them after the U.S.S.R. had suspended its nuclear test programme last August.

The Soviet proposals take the European aspect of the nuclear problem into account as well—**Moscow wants the complete elimination of intermediate-range missiles of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. in the European zone,** both ballistic and cruise. As part of this measure, the U.S. should pledge not to transfer its strategic and intermediate-range missiles to other countries, and Britain and France should not build up their relevant nuclear arms. This is only fair: the East and West European nations must be able to rest assured that, while American and Soviet nuclear arsenals are being reduced, France and Britain will not build up theirs. Such an agreement would undoubtedly be a first major step to free Europe from nuclear arms and reduce the danger of war in general.

It would be in place to recall here that **the Soviet nuclear disarmament programme fully accords with the understandings reached at the Soviet-American summit in Geneva** last November. Far from impinging on anyone's interests, it will preserve strategic stability at all stages of nuclear disarmament. The measures we suggest with regard to European intermediate-range missiles, as well as other points in the Soviet plan, are to embody the Geneva spirit in concrete actions. The new Soviet proposals also offer a chance to give an additional impetus to the nuclear and space arms talks, expediting which was provided for by an agreement reached at the Geneva summit.

Trying to agree on radical nuclear arms cuts and at the same time developing weapons for "star wars" runs counter to the understanding reaffirmed at the summit that the problems connected with space and strategic weapons are interconnected and should be dealt with as a single complex issue. The Soviet and American leaders agreed in Geneva that neither side should seek military superiority and that nuclear war should not be unleashed. Translated into the language of practical action, **this means the simultaneous renunciation of space strike weapons and reduction of nuclear arms.** There can be no radical cuts in strategic forces without Washington scrapping its "star wars" programme.

The latest statements by spokesmen of the U.S. Administration on its adherence to SDI, the intensification of the development of space strike weapons and the continued deployment of American intermediate-range missiles in Europe give no grounds for assuming that Washington's post-Geneva position has become more constructive. So far, the U.S. has given no response to the Soviet nuclear disarmament programme.

The stage which has set in at the nuclear and space arms talks calls for responsibility of the highest order.

Washington has repeatedly voiced its desire to hold a constructive dialogue. These words have not yet been backed up by actions.

The Road to Multilateral Agreements

The Soviet programme for the complete elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons by the end of this century makes for more rapid progress on the main questions now under discussion at the Geneva Disarmament Conference too. The Soviet proposals evoked considerable interest at the forum where 40 countries are represented. They facilitate a more active discussion of the priority item on the Disarmament Conference's agenda—the banning of nuclear weapon tests. Many delegates call upon the United States to join the nuclear tests moratorium prolonged by the U.S.S.R. till March 31. The U.S.S.R. also deems it important for the Disarmament Conference where all five nuclear powers are represented to **concentrate on the solution of the problems connected with banning nuclear weapon tests in general through the conclusion of a multilateral agreement.** The Soviet delegation at the Disarmament Conference is authorized to make every effort so that multilateral talks on a nuclear test ban be started at that forum. The new Soviet proposals on verification remove all doubts as to the reliability of monitoring the observance of a complete and universal ban on nuclear weapons tests.

The current situation demands that the U.S.S.R., the U.S. and Britain should complete the trilateral talks, cut short by the American side in 1980, aimed at working out a treaty on the complete and universal banning of nuclear tests. The Soviet Union is also prepared to agree that the 1963 Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and underwater should be extended to include underground tests.

The Soviet proposals also allow for starting at the Geneva conference a productive discussion of **the programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with all the five nuclear powers taking part.** The Soviet programme suggests that after the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. have carried out major reductions of their nuclear arsenals at the first stage, Britain, France and China join in the efforts for nuclear disarmament. However, all the nuclear powers and other conference participants are free to voice their opinions and suggest ways of facilitating the implementation of this programme in the early period of the reduction process.

The concrete measures to deliver the world from nuclear weapons provided for by the Soviet programme bear upon such items on the conference agenda as preventing nuclear war and ending the nuclear arms race. Even stopping nuclear weapon tests (a priority provision of the Soviet programme), let alone agreeing in principle on starting the process of nuclear disarmament, would sharply reduce the nuclear threat and ease world tensions right away.

The new Soviet proposals offer the conference the basis for negotiations—blocked by the U.S. for years—**on preventing an arms race in outer space.** The U.S.S.R. suggests that the drafting of a concrete agreement on outer space be started at last.

The suggestions put forward in Mikhail Gorbachev's Statement **to eliminate chemical, as well as nuclear, weapons before the end of the century** make possible a "breakthrough" in this aspect of the conference's work as well. Although some important provisions of a future convention on the elimination of chemical weapons have been agreed upon, these negotiations have been impermissibly dragged out, with the West using the threadbare "control issue" to slow them down. Seeking to bring an agreement nearer, the Soviet Union meets its partners in the negotiations halfway on the most contentious issues, including those relating to control. It is ready to give timely notification of the location of enterprises producing chemical weapons and to terminate their production, and to start working out procedures for destroying the relevant industrial base. After the convention has come into effect, we shall also be prepared to eliminate stockpiles of these weapons under strict international control.

Along with the intensification of efforts to coordinate the convention's provisions, the U.S.S.R. suggests reaching an agreement, **on a multilateral basis, not to transfer chemical weapons to anyone and not to deploy them on the territories of other states.** The U.S.S.R. strictly adheres to these principles in its practical policy. It deems it useful to coordinate and take international action lest the trade in chemicals should lead to the proliferation of chemical weapons and add to the danger of their use. Moscow has already made certain moves in this direction. Recently the Soviet government endorsed a rule regulating the export of so-called dual-purpose chemicals which can be put to peaceful uses and go into the making of chemical weapons alike.

Guarantees of Confidence

The Soviet proposals provide favourable conditions for dramatic progress in 1986 at the Vienna talks on troop and arms reduction in Central Europe. While offering a concrete programme for the elimination of the most dangerous and destructive weapons, both nuclear and chemical, **the Soviet Union is prepared at the same time to limit and reduce its conventional arms and reduce the numerical strength of its armed forces** as substantially as other states would like to do.

An agreement reached at the Vienna talks could initiate a reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces. Some headway is being made towards a likely decision on the initial reduction of Soviet and American troops and the subsequent freezing of the NATO and Warsaw Treaty armed forces in Central Europe. The Western partners in the negotiations have accepted the socialist countries' proposal of such a first step towards the reduction of the level of military confrontation in the region. However, the NATO countries' counter-proposals are still one-sided. They suggest cumbersome and complicated control arrangements far in excess of what is reasonably required to ensure the observance of the initial cuts in question.

The agreement likely to be reached in Vienna will certainly call for reasonable control measures. The socialist countries are every bit as interested as the NATO states in a strict observance of their commitments by both sides. Their proposals for control provide, apart from the use of national control facilities, for such measures as the exchange of lists of the troop contingents being reduced and withdrawn, mutual notification of the commencement and completion of troop reductions, and the setting up by each side of three to four observation points for the duration of the outgoing troops' withdrawal. Quite recently the U.S.S.R. suggested that additional permanent control points be set up in the troop reduction zones to supervise the freeze on the numerical strength of troops after their reduction in a given zone has been completed.

Consequently, the participants in the Vienna talks are now in a position to remove artificial barriers erected in the way of control. This is a convincing demonstration of the Soviet Union's good will, its readiness to seek mutually acceptable agreements that would lead the Vienna talks out of the impasse. The ball is now in the West's court.

The proposals put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev in his Statement have made the participants in the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe more confident of success.

The decisions of this important forum are to **impede the use of armed force and secret preparations for war on land, at sea or in the air.** The U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries insist that

all measures to be agreed upon in Stockholm should in effect guarantee that military activities in Europe present no threat to any state.

The conference has now entered the stage of working out a concrete agreement whereby it will be possible to get down to resolving the outstanding issues. The Soviet Union believes that if they should prove insoluble taken as a whole, an attempt should be made to resolve them piecemeal. This applies, for instance, to such a "difficult" issue as the prior notification of major military manoeuvres of land, naval and air forces. In order to effect a compromise, the U.S.S.R. has suggested that an agreement on notification of major land and air force manoeuvres be reached now and that the question of naval activities be taken up at the next stage of the conference.

In his recently published replies to questions put by the French newspaper L'Humanité, Mikhail Gorbachev pointed out that the Geneva summit had definitely changed the political atmosphere and revived people's hope for and faith in the possibility of bringing détente back and ending the insane arms race. This hope must not be disappointed. The agreements reached by the leaders of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. must be made a reality. This calls for concrete decisions and weighty agreements at the Soviet-American negotiations on nuclear and space weapons, and at all other negotiations on disarmament.

The Soviet programme for ensuring international security has already become a major factor in world politics. Its provisions and specific details, as well as the very concept of solving the security problem it offers, are being studied in depth by the governments of many countries and disarmament experts, and debated by the public at large. Various aspects of the Soviet programme are being considered, in one form or another, as integral to international disarmament talks. It is becoming increasingly obvious from day to day that the home country of world socialism has submitted to the governments and nations of the world a realistic platform on which to combine their efforts to save mankind from self-destruction and a nuclear holocaust and to achieve a secure and durable peace by the year 2000.

The Soviet programme for nuclear and chemical disarmament is a solemn oath by the CPSU Central Committee to the Soviet people to do everything in its power to remove the danger of war. The provisions of this programme, which give expression to our Party's long-term international policy line, will be comprehensively discussed at the 27th CPSU Congress which opens shortly. ■

PANORAMA

KOREAN PENINSULA

PYONGYANG SETS THE EXAMPLE

Some time ago the newspaper put out by Yonsei University in South Korea carried a "report" of an imaginary meeting between students from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and students from South Korea. It was presented as being somewhat utopian, understandably, considering that the South Korean authorities are doing everything in their power to thwart the desire of Koreans, North and South, to end the division of their country.

But is the desire really so farfetched?

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the D.P.R.K., which have the support also of progressives in the South, the idea of a dialogue between the two sides is taking root. Its ultimate aim would be to reach agreement on ways and means of bringing about the peaceful democratic reunification of the country. Wishing to facilitate the achievement of this by no means simple objective and to create the much needed atmosphere of trust, Pyongyang has proposed as an initial step in this direction contacts between the Red Cross organizations and the parliaments of North and South, as well as trade and economic cooperation. The D.P.R.K. has made some definite suggestions. For instance, to restore railway communication between the two parts of the peninsula, and open the ports of Nampho and Wonsan in the North and Inchon and Pohang in the South. Other D.P.R.K. proposals could be cited, relating, for example, to joint exploitation and use of minerals, fisheries, and in the sphere of agriculture. The advantages of such cooperation, both economic and, more importantly, political, are obvious.

The stand taken by the D.P.R.K. is one of principle: once both sides have proclaimed the reunification of the country to be their national objective, each side should do everything in its power to achieve it. For its part, the D.P.R.K. has taken steps in this direction. It has called on the United States and South Korea to hold trilateral talks to discuss and stabilize the situation on the peninsula. Its proposals to Seoul include the conclusion of a reliable agreement on peace in Korea in place of the present shaky truce, signing a declaration on non-aggression, the mutual reduction of armed forces, and making the Korean peninsula a nuclear-free zone of peace. It goes without saying that a dialogue between North and South will be productive only if all foreign interference is ruled out. In a word, if the American troops withdraw from the South together with their nuclear arsenal and dismantle their military bases.

More, North Korea has undertaken as of February 1 a unilateral commitment not to hold major military exercises or manoeuvres of any kind on its territory or in its coastal waters while the negotiations between North and South are in progress. Is that not an example worth following?

While North Korea is actively searching for roads to peace, the United States and South Korea are flexing their military muscles, creating a new threat to security in the Far East.

Reuters—TASS photo

But what was the reply? It came on February 10 in the form of a cannonade, as more than 200,000 servicemen from the Seoul army and U.S. troops launched Team Spirit-86 war games. Dangerous games! Hence the concern expressed in the letter addressed by the D.P.R.K. to the U.N. Secretary-General pointing out that the responsibility for the breaking off of dialogue between North and South owing to the aggravation of the situation on the peninsula rests wholly with the U.S. and South Korea.

Nevertheless, we believe that dialogue is possible. But to get it started the least that should be done is to end the dangerous war games.

V. GRISHIN

U.S.A.—PACIFIC

VICTIMS OF NEOGLOBALISM

The institution of trusteeship presupposes helping towards the political, economic and social development of the peoples of the trust territories. The policy Washington is pursuing with regard to the islands in the Pacific is more like annexation. The method used is to impose on each island separately a "compact of free association" with the U.S. That is what happened in the case of the Marianas. Not long ago the U.S. President signed a bill on "association" with the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. The same fate lies in store for the Palau Islands. Washington is openly planning to use them for military bases. The London Times reports that the U.S. has concluded an agreement with Palau on the establishment on its territories of air, naval and training centres should the U.S. military installations in the Philippines be dismantled.

The object of this unlawful policy with regard to Micronesia is thus laid bare. Now that the peoples of one country after another are questioning the presence of American bases on their territories, the U.S. strategists are casting covetous eyes on new, and, in their view, less troubled corners of the globe. The islands in the Western Pacific in particular, which afford a truly vast territory for nuclear missile arsenals and naval and air bases. It is not by chance that when 13 states in the southwestern Pacific decided last year to conclude an agreement proclaiming this part of the ocean a nuclear-free zone, Washington at once opposed it on the grounds that it could "bar U.S. access to the Pacific." It saw another threat to that "access" in the present situation in the Philippines, where presidential elections were held on February 7. To avert that threat Washington hastened to extend its military presence on the Philippines by transferring the cruiser Blue Ridge, flagship of the U.S. 7th Fleet, and the aircraft carrier Midway from Japanese ports to the Subic Bay base. More importantly, the U.S. stepped up its interference in the Philippines internal affairs. A large group of "observers" were sent to monitor the elections there and when the votes were being counted President Reagan's special envoy Philip Habib was on the spot. These measures were prompted ostensibly by concern for the "democratic" conduct of the elections. But the real object was plain. The Manila Veritas said: "It is clear now that all Mr Reagan cares about is his two precious bases in the Philippines." Nor does the White House deny it. Washington made it quite clear that no matter who won the elections the important thing was to preserve the U.S. bases there. "I don't know of anything more important than the Philippine bases," the President has said.

Presidential elections were held in the Philippines on February 7. After the counting of votes which lasted for several days, the National Assembly announced that the current President Ferdinand Marcos had won. The opposition and its candidate Corazon Aquino protested the official election returns. Above: a special parliamentary commission checking on the vote.

Reuters—TASS photo

Seeking a new lever for military pressure on the Philippines and other Asian countries, the U.S. is reaching out to Micronesia. Besides suppressing the desire of its population for independence and social progress—in violation of the U.N. Charter—it is turning this area into a U.S. strategic springboard, thereby threatening the security of all the countries of the Asian and Pacific region. This cannot but seriously disquiet the world community.

"The fate of the people of Micronesia," a TASS statement published on February 14 says, "is a component part of the problem of decolonization, and it is the duty of the United Nations, of all its members to thwart the attempts to confront the world with the accomplished fact of the annexation of this territory by the United States. Moreover, the annexationist plans with regard to Micronesia are a clear manifestation of the imperial ambitions of the United States, the realization in practice of the policy of neoglobalism. If no barriers are raised to the seizure of the Pacific islands, tomorrow other countries and territories may well be the object of American expansion.

N. SHIMMEL

LIBYA—CHAD

PINCERS?

In February tension mounted off the shores of Libya and the thunder of guns was heard again in neighbouring Chad. One cannot escape the impression that there is a direct and close connection between these developments. The same old "NATO hand" is discernible here.

In a recent issue of the American Newsweek magazine we read that "the Reagan Administration has decided to escalate the pressure on Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi by keeping a constant air or naval presence off the Libyan coast." It was precisely to this end that, two weeks after the "show of strength" by the U.S. Sixth Fleet near the Libyan coast, the Pentagon again stepped up tension in the Southern Mediterranean by holding large-scale manoeuvres in which some 20 ships, 150 Phantoms, and several submarines took part. The aircraft carriers Coral Sea and Saratoga appeared in the area, with warplanes on board, which, according to a Pentagon spokesman, might be ordered into "disputed airspace" for "harassment tactic" against Gaddafi. Another aircraft carrier, America, is due to join the armada of American ships off the Libyan coast shortly.

Some newspapers warn that the United States could be contemplating direct invasion of Libya and that the American naval and air manoeuvres are preparation for an act of aggression of this kind.

The purpose of all this, Radio Tripoli says, is to frighten the Libyan people, compel Libya to renounce its firm position on the aggressive schemes of American imperialism and Zionism in the Middle East. However, the Libyan people, like the Lebanese two years

ago, have not quailed in the face of the threat of gunfire from the ships and warplanes of the Sixth Fleet. The Washington policy of playing with fire in the Mediterranean has been strongly condemned by world public opinion. U.S. attempts to organize "collective reprisals" by the West European countries against Libya have in effect also come to nought. Washington's anti-Libyan policy is beginning more and more to be seen as a political defeat for the U.S.

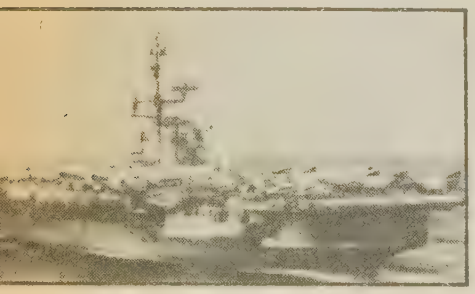
And now a brand-new slander campaign has been launched against Libya, which is accused of attempting to aggravate the conflict in Chad that has been going on for years. It is noteworthy that at the very time when the U.S. Sixth Fleet was engaging in provocative manoeuvres on the northern frontiers of Libya, fierce fighting broke out near that country's southern borders between the troops of the pro-Western Hissène Habré regime and detachments of the patriotic forces of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) headed by Goukouni Oueddei. According to a TGNU spokesman, Habré's troops launched an offensive against the patriotic forces in the area of the town of Oum-Chalouba, but were thrown back. This served as a pretext for France again to intervene in the conflict in its former colony. French Minister of Defence Paul Quilès hastened to Chad and a French military contingent was dispatched there. At the same time, French troops stationed at military bases in the Central African Republic and Gabon were put on the alert. As was the case during the neocolonialist Operation Manta some three years ago, military equipment has begun to be airlifted to Chad from France. Moreover, the French aircraft bombed the airdrome in Ouadi-Doum, a town in northern Chad through which, according to the Libyan news agency JANA, the local population received food and medical supplies.

All this, of course, suits Washington which has long been looking for an ally to exert pressure on Libya. With the Reagan Administration's decision to escalate that pressure, it looks very much as if American imperialism, with the help of French neocolonialism, would like to make a pincer movement around this independent Arab state whose foreign and domestic policy is not to its liking.

E. KORSHUNOV

The U.S. aircraft carrier Coral Sea, seen here in the Southern Mediterranean, is part of the U.S. Sixth Fleet used by Washington to dictate its will to the peoples of the Middle East.

Photo from Newsweek (U.S.A.)



PORTUGAL

SETBACK FOR THE RIGHT

The victory in the presidential elections of Mario Soares, who polled more than 51 per cent of the votes in the second round on February 16, highlighted the seriousness of the political problems facing Portugal today.

The leader of the Socialist Party could not have won without the support of the Communists. Although the Communist Party has no illusions about Soares and his programme, it nevertheless urged its supporters to vote for him. At their extraordinary congress, the Communists pointed out that in the situation that emerged after the defeat of the Communist candidate in the first round of the elections on January 26, it would be better if the presidential post were occupied by a Socialist rather than the representative of the Right, Diogo Freitas do Amaral.

Soares won the votes of the middle and petty bourgeoisie who fear the power of the transnational corporations of the Common Market. The transnationals welcomed Lisbon's entry into the European Economic Community, counting on a victory for Amaral in which case the right-centre Social Democrat minority government they had installed in power last November would have gained the additional support it needed to "modernize" Portugal along capitalist lines. This meant clearing the way for the concerns by ruining the small firms, the farmers and fishermen, exerting pressure on the trade unions and continuing the dismantling of the state sector. But the plans of the Right did not materialize.

It is hard to say to what extent the hopes of Soares' supporters that a Socialist President will soften the shock of Portugal's entry into the EEC will be justified. It will be remembered that Soares is a convinced advocate of entry into the Common Market. At the same time the setback for the reaction showed once again that the Left forces continue to wield considerable influence in the country.

L. MAKAREVICH

SOUTH AFRICA

FAILED SALVAGE BID

It looks as if President Pieter Botha of South Africa has shaken the last crumb out of his slim package of "reforms" without having earned any plaudits. Even Washington and London reacted coolly to the new proposals he made on January 31.

At first glance it might seem that Botha has gone quite far: there are promises to repeal the pass law and to create a new "multiracial advisory council," and hints have even been made at the possibility of releasing Nelson Mandela. But it is only by the standards of the shortsighted diehard devotees of apartheid that the South African President might seem to have gone "quite far." To anyone with normal eyesight all Botha's "reforms" do not add up to even a small step towards ending apartheid. Moreover, his January 31 proposals were not made of his own free will but under the pressure of the black majority and world public opinion. He is simply throwing unnecessary ballast overboard in the hope of keeping the ship of apartheid afloat.

The political atmosphere in South Africa today is such that any initiative from above, however "radical" it might appear, far from evoking any enthusiasm has exactly the opposite effect.

"Too little, too late," is how the op-

Botha's police use submachine guns, whips, bludgeons and even dogs to disperse anti-apartheid demonstrations.

AP—TASS photo

pressed majority, confident of its strength, replies to government promises. The Africans see in the "reforms" a clumsy attempt to gain time in an attempt to salvage what can no longer be saved.

Things have come to a point where even the white community has lost faith in Botha. Its various leaders are pulling in different directions, aggravating the disagreements, tension and pessimism in their own camp. The ultra-Rights denounce his reforms and accuse him of betraying Afrikaaner ideals. They maintain, with some justice, that the government's policy has deepened the contradictions among the whites, split the ruling elite, led the Nationalist Party into an impasse and brought the country to the brink of civil war. The "liberals" accuse him of being inconsistent, although they agree that the whites' privileges must be left intact. The President encounters dissent even in his immediate entourage. On February 7 he publicly reprimanded his foreign minister for an unsanctioned and "incorrect" interpretation of the government's plans.

The economic crisis, the declining confidence of foreign investors and the growth of anti-racist action have weakened Botha's position still more. There is even talk of his being played out as a political leader. Some even doubt he will last as President until the end of the year.

Botha thus finds himself in a cleft stick. Not, of course, because he holds "radical" views, as some of his own newspapers and the Western media would have us believe, but simply because the strategy he has devised for saving the white minority has proved fallacious through and through. The ruling clique has displayed utter political myopia, the inability to gauge the acuteness of the problems and to realize the inevitability of far-reaching changes.

It must be said that in what is for him a well-nigh catastrophic situation Botha has remained true to type. The brutal repressions and gross threats addressed to the opponents of apartheid within and without the country are again tempered with honeyed speeches designed to convince all and sundry that he stands for "continuing the changes." He uses sheer rhetoric to justify the unceasing reprisals against the unarmed Africans, the continued state of emergency, the blackmail and aggression against neighbouring African states.

The only thing of any value in the President's speech of January 31 was his admission that apartheid is an outdated concept. But, one might ask, if apartheid has outlived its time why are people who fight against it still being killed and imprisoned? The answer is simple. President Botha calls "outdated" only those aspects of apartheid which in modern conditions have ceased to accord with the racists' interests. He proposes "modernizing," "humanizing" apartheid.

Although such "constancy" is no longer surprising, Botha ought to realize that no amount of cosmetics, no face-lifting will make that barbarous system look attractive. Its complete and unconditional abolition alone will open the way to peace and justice in South Africa.

B. ASOYAN

DIPLOMATS VISIT ART SHOW

At the invitation of the Soviet Foreign Ministry the heads and cultural attachés of foreign embassies in Moscow have visited an exhibition of the works by artists from all parts of the Soviet Union entitled "We Are Building Communism."

The guests were welcomed by Nikolai Ponomaryov, President of the Soviet Artists' Union, who said the 2,500-work exhibition was, as it were, a summing up of artists' work on the threshold of the Party congress.

The doyen of the diplomatic corps, Bulgarian Ambassador Dimitr Zhulev, wrote in the Visitors' Book that the works on view "reveal the fervent striving of the Soviet people for peaceful constructive life on our planet."

A. VIKTOROV

UGANDA

BEGINNINGS OF CHANGE

Yoweri Museveni, the head of the National Resistance Movement (NRM), has been sworn in as the new President of Uganda. He also heads the new supreme body of power—the National Resistance Council. A new cabinet has been formed which, besides the NRM leaders, includes representatives of other political parties.

These developments were preceded by five years of armed struggle waged by the National Resistance Army (NRA) formed in 1981, first against Milton Obote and later against the Military Council headed by General Tito Okello, which overthrew Obote last July. After four months of negotiations between Museveni and Okello, a peace agreement was signed in Nairobi on December 17, 1985, but in less than a month fighting broke out again, and on January 27 the NRA took possession of the capital Kampala. The Military Council and its government were disbanded.

Today the National Resistance Army controls the greater part of the territory of the republic. Museveni appealed to the troops loyal to the Military Council to lay down their arms. According to Western press reports, about 11,000 soldiers—one fourth of the former Ugandan army—have ceased resistance. Part of the supporters of the previous regime have gone over to the side of the new authorities.

However, fighting continues in some areas, mainly in the north which is inhabited by two tribes—the Langi and the Acholi—who made up the bulk of the army of the previous regime. They now form the main body of Okello's forces grouped in the vicinity of the towns of Gulu, Kitgum and Arua. The NRA is trying to establish its control over the strategically important bridge across the Nile at the Karuma falls on the road between Gulu and Kampala.

In the capital and other cities under NRA control, life is returning to normal. The people, weary of coups that have succeeded one another for nearly two decades, now hope that the new regime will ensure order.

Addressing a press conference, Museveni called for an end to the civil war. He promised to hold general elections in three or five years. In the meantime, he said, the constitution will have to be revised, a new army formed and the government apparatus reorganized. He advanced a programme, true only in outline, for improving the economic situation, including an increase in agricultural production, road building, a struggle against corruption and smuggling, primarily against illegal export of coffee, which accounts for 90 per cent of Uganda's hard currency earnings. He said the government would try to pay its foreign debts but would not be intimidated by the International Monetary Fund which wants to have Uganda's currency system reorganized.

In the sphere of foreign policy Museveni spoke of the government's adherence to the idea of non-alignment, and said that it would seek good relations with all countries except South Africa and Israel.

Uganda is faced with some complex problems. They can only be resolved in the context of national unity.

N. RESHETNYAK

IRAN—IRAQ

NO VICTORS

A new situation developed on the Iran-Iraq front in February. The hostilities now centre on the river Shatt al Arab, which forms the estuary of the Tigris and Euphrates and also the Karun River on the Iranian side. This waterway is very important for both countries. The big Iraqi port of Basrah is situated on the banks of the Shatt al Arab while the Iraqi oil port of Fao and the Iranian towns of Khurramshahr and Abadan are on the estuary itself. These ports serve as oil transshipment points at the head of the Persian Gulf.

Foreign observers have been predicting for some time that an Iranian offensive would be launched in this area. And early in February Teheran reported that Iranian troops had captured the port of Fao and advanced deep into Iraqi territory coming close to the frontiers of Kuwait, which, like many other Arab countries, is on Iraq's side in this conflict.

According to the American CBS television, Iran says its troops have crossed the southern part of Iraq and reached the waterway separating the territory of Iraq from Kuwait. If this is true, CBS observes, Iran has scored the biggest victory since the beginning of the war. It would mean that Ayatollah Khomeini's army will be next door to the capital of Kuwait and not far from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. In the opinion of the Paris Le Monde, on the other hand, "the seizure by Iranian troops of a bridgehead on the Iraqi side can only be temporary, since Iraq has the undisputed advantage in armaments, especially in air power." It is reported from Baghdad that Iraqi troops in the Fao area are employing tactic of encircling and smashing the Iranian forces.

However that may be, one thing is clear—the latest developments show once again that there can be no victors in the Iran-Iraq war. Only the imperialist circles stand to gain by it.

The U.S.S.R., as Eduard Shevardnadze stressed again during his meeting on February 17 with the Iraqi Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz, consistently stands for the speediest termination of the conflict and for a political settlement of the disputed issues at the negotiating table.

D. ZGERSKY

Arab opinion everywhere recognizes that this not very large country plays a key role in the Arab world

ENERGY AND DYNAMISM

DMITRY VOLSKY and PAVEL DAVYDOV

We were standing amidst the ruins of Kuneitra, a city with a tragic fate. Israel captured it in its June 1967 aggression and virtually the entire population fled the city. But they were not destined to return to it even after the invaders had to withdraw following the October 1973 war. The Israelis left behind not a city but rubble, though shells and bombs had spared it: Kuneitra was razed to the ground by bulldozers and explosives as the invaders decided not to leave a single building standing for the Syrians.

Could it have been rebuilt? Perhaps it could. But the Israelis continue to hold the Golan Heights and the threat of another act of aggression persists. So the empty windows of the ruined hospital, Kuneitra's onetime pride, remind everyone of the danger, as does the rubble of the mosques and churches blown up by the invaders. All of a sudden we saw sparkling frescoes. Had they miraculously survived? Why did the colours seem so fresh? It turned out that an unknown artist had painted on the walls of a ruined Christian church a symbolic picture: children, hand in hand, dance against the background of the ruined city and shreds of Israeli newspapers, while a dove with an olive branch in its beak soars above. There is no hidden political message in the picture: what it conveys is belief in the future of a people who, despite all hardships, are full of energy and dynamism.

Close-Ups and Flashbacks

Of course, years of oppression, first by the Ottomans and then by European colonialists, have left their imprint on the country. Even today the economic, cultural and intellectual potential of Syria cannot be considered to be completely unfettered, especially since, as we were told at the Ministry for Planning Affairs, the country has been spending more than 50 per cent of its budget on defence since 1948. Needless to say, this holds back economic and cultural progress, as well as public health care and education. There also are domestic problems, which we will discuss below. But impressive, if controversial, changes in Syria over the past few years are undeniable. One of the present authors was seeing the country after an interval of 15 years and many of these changes amazed him. The other had been following the process of change closely as he had been posted to Damascus three years previously. So let us try the film-makers' trick of shooting with two cameras, presenting close-ups and flashbacks. What will our lens zoom in on first of all? What will be omitted, and what has disappeared altogether?

There are no beggars or homeless people. Once barefoot boys pestered passersby for alms in the streets—but there are none today. Instead, we saw in every township or village merry groups of children hurrying to school. Syria today has roughly two million schoolchildren and 250,000 students (Damascus University alone has a student population of some 50,000). There are about as many girls as boys among them, which is especially significant in a Moslem country. Far more developed states could take pride in such figures. Infant mortality has declined, life expectancy increased and physicians and specialists offer their services from notice boards erected virtually in every street in Damascus or Aleppo. People are better dressed and shops offer a variety of goods. Only a close examination will show that most of them are produced domestically rather than imported from the West: the textile and leather industries are sensitive to fashion and demand.

It is not only consumer goods made in Syria that enjoy a high reputation. Syrian-made cement is also a sought-after commodity. Fine cement dust lightly shrouds new apartment development projects around Damascus. Construction projects are also under way in other cities and in the countryside. Newly designed farmers' homes with plumbing and windows looking onto the street and not only onto the courtyard, as is usual with Moslem homes, are springing up everywhere. But the primary areas of development are those where water has been brought to the sun-scorched land, where marshland has been drained or soil cleared of stones. Fresh greenery on the brown earth, like bright green rugs on a parquet floor, gladdens the eye at all times of year, even in January. The land is changing, as is the life of farmers along with it, especially next to the straight broad highways that have crossed the country from east to west and north to south.

New railroads have also been built in Syria. The land is not rich in mineral resources but geologists persevere in looking for them. Till recently Syria merely refined oil imported from other Arab countries. Now oil has been struck in the country and even begun to be exported. The key industries were nationalized, along with the banks, in the 1960s. Planning was introduced at about the same time and began to expand, especially after the present-day leadership of Hafiz al-Assad came to power in the 1970s.

"We have carried out three five-year development plans since that time," Sabah Bakjaji, Minister of State for Planning Affairs, told us in his office. "Each of them had specific priorities. The 1971-75 plan period was focussed on expanding irrigation and building dams and power stations. The Euphrates hydropower project was the largest facility built at that time. The next five-year period (1976-80) was a time of industrial growth, with cement plants and textile factories built on a large scale. The latest one, which ended in 1985, laid emphasis on the development of the economic infrastructure, including roads, bridges and power transmission lines. The new five-year-plan period will concentrate on the development of agriculture. It is to begin this year but plans are still under discussion. Why do we attach priority to agriculture? Our long-term goal is self-sufficiency in food. Food imports are costly, and there is the old saying: 'Allah does not bless a people fed and clothed at the expense of others. . . .'"

The Minister was not really serious when he expressed apprehensions about divine favour. The Syrians live by their

own work, and today they live markedly better than they did yesterday. Our host cited an impressive figure, $1,650 a year, which is the per capita income. It is an average, of course, and many factors influence income distribution, not the least of them being the balance between the private and public sectors of the economy.

This balance is hard to determine. We heard several figures, some of them controversial. This is small wonder in view of the complex character of the Syrian economy and the close intertwining of the private and public sectors. There is also a mixed sector, in which government organizations and private capital cooperate. Moreover, private capital from other Arab countries, such as Saudi Arabia, is attracted as well.

The private sector prevails in agriculture, trade, the services and is quite active in the construction business. Syria has not only millionaires but even billionaires—at least, if their wealth is assessed in the local currency. But the Syrians believe that the point is not the size of incomes, the mansions or cars owned by businessmen. What is important is whether their operations help national economic growth. There are not a few shrewd but honest businessmen who, while not forgetting their own interests, nonetheless contribute to the economic progress of the country and help to tap its latent resources. Moreover, the Syrians say that such proprietors make the public sector show more enterprise and dynamism and shake off the malaise the Arabs call "heder," which is the production of goods no one needs, the squandering of money, and red tape.

However, there are other influences as well. We were told about road-building. Government organizations give out contracts to build highways to several companies simultaneously: one gets a 20-km section, another 50 kms, and so on. In this way the progress of work can be controlled, but there is also room for abuses. It is common knowledge that proprietors often bribe officials and the more companies are involved, the larger the opportunities for abuses. Intermediaries between government organizations and private companies, both Syrian and foreign, are commonplace. They get 10-20 per cent of the value of the contract and rank among the richest people in the country. The number of nouveaux riches, who deplete rather than stimulate the public sector, and corrupt government officials, is growing. That is why such people are characterized not merely as "parasitic" but "parasitic-bureaucratic bourgeoisie."

"Things have gone so far that they have grown into a political threat," we were told by Youssef Faisal, Deputy Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Syria, which participates in the National Progressive Front and controls two cabinet portfolios. Geebran Kuria, an adviser to President Assad, also mentioned the danger of the parasitic-bureaucratic bourgeoisie, while Ahmed Dearham, a member of the regional leadership of the ruling Baath Party, said:

"The private sector prefers to invest in commerce and other fields offering quick profit rather than in production. But it is only one aspect of the problem. Just remember 1980, when the Muslim Brothers were rampant here. It was not just a domestic crisis: the rebellion was timed to coincide with the Camp David meeting and the Brothers were backed by outside imperialist and reactionary forces bent on subverting our progressive regime from within. It was not by chance that they attacked government-owned industries, setting fire to factories and destroying the property of farming cooperatives. What domestic forces except private capital could benefit from that rebellion? The plan was simple: the Muslim Brothers take up arms and capital takes power."

The rebellion of Moslem fanatics, who, perhaps, themselves did not know whose interests they served, was resolutely stamped out. Ruined buildings and walls pockmarked with bullets are still to be seen in the city of Hama, the centre of the rebellion. But the situation today is normal, though the authorities remain vigilant and are taking security measures. In particular, a spokesman for the People's Army, a militia-like force, told us that 3,000 fighters were constantly under arms in Hama and that there was an additional 4,000-strong reserve force.

A Long Uphill Process

The Syrians understand, however, that domestic political stability depends on a number of factors, primarily economic and social. That is why efforts are being made to prevent the growth of inequality and to meet the interests of the poorer sections of the population. Minimum wages have been raised considerably and a rather low ceiling has been set for rents. But though there is considerable demand for housing, landlords prefer to lock up apartments rather than lease them at official rates. Despite serious housing shortages in Damascus many flats remain vacant. There are other instances of paradox. There is no shortage of doctors in private practice, but far from everyone can pay their prices. So today, despite the opposition of private practitioners, a programme for general free medical care is being drawn up. The government is trying to control prices to keep down inflation as shops are packed with goods but there are few buyers. Governmental regulation of the economy is called upon to play an important social and political role as well.

"The public sector is the bulwark of the interests of the mass of the population," Ahmed Dearham said. "We are not pessimists and, regardless of the pressure on Syria, believe in the socialist perspective because we know that socialism alone is capable of resolving the problems of Third World countries. But it is a long uphill process."

Social and economic realities in Syria are proof that the process is indeed long and difficult. Syria is of course dif-

Working on the construction site of an irrigation complex being built in Syria with the help of the Soviet Union.

TASS photo

ferent from Cuba with its universal equality, public ownership of all the means of production and care taken by the socialist state of each of its citizens. But it is even more unlike the Egyptian or, to be more precise, the Philippine "model" with the dominance of foreign banks and transnationals, glaring social contrasts and unemployment. There is an undercurrent of opposite tendencies in Syria, as in many other developing countries, and external circumstances, naturally, influence the clash between them. But it is first and foremost the line-up of domestic, social and political forces that is decisive at any given moment. Something will take root and something else will wither away but only the natural course of events will determine the outcome. What is especially important is that the Syrian people should not be interfered with as they decide their destiny and that they should not be insistently offered alien "models" and "systems," as the U.S. Administration has lately been doing with regard to developing countries.

As for the Soviet Union, nothing could be further from its policy and practice than such an approach, whatever Western analysts may claim. Moscow does not press any "models" on anyone, as this would be contrary to the basic principles of Soviet internationalist policy. The U.S.S.R. considers Syria and its other friends in the Third World equal partners and develops cooperation with them only on this basis. Moreover, cooperation with the Soviet Union helps them bolster their independence and the ability to defend it. It suffices to list those sectors of the Syrian economy in which cooperation with the U.S.S.R. played or is playing a key role to understand this: irrigation, power engineering, oil production, the development of the railroad network and personnel training. Bilateral cooperation in each of those fields could be a subject of a special article, so we will touch upon another aspect, not as well known but no less important for all that.

Not the Language Alone

A huge lake sparkles in a picturesque valley amidst high mountains, reminiscent of the Alps or the Caucasus, not far from Latakia. It is a man-made reservoir, created relatively recently by Syrian and Soviet engineers and workers.

"Soviet specialists are working dedicatedly and enjoy well-deserved respect here, as they do all over Syria," Latakia Governor Aziz Sakr told us. "Incidentally, when I went out to the project, Soviet specialists were both happy and surprised to hear me speak Russian. But then we really found a common tongue in every sense of the word."

Russian can indeed cause surprise in the provinces—but no longer in the capital. Everyone in Damascus knows the modern building of the Soviet Cultural Centre, the doors of which are always wide open to visitors. The atmosphere in it is calm and comfortable, though there are always many visitors, especially young people. The building was put up in the very heart of the city after the old centre had been demolished by an Israeli bomb in 1973. There are two libraries, one of Arab-language literature and the other of Russian-language publications, a concert hall, where we heard Soviet songs performed by a Damascus student company, and classrooms with desks for adults. Quite recently these classes were attended by two Syrian cosmonauts now in training for a space mission: they were learning Russian. This was told us with pride by the Russian-language teachers, who met at the cultural centre for a theoretical conference, and not the first one either.

One of the conferees, Dr Bassam Al-Haj Hussein, head of the Russian-language centre at Damascus University, told us about his problems. Russian grammar is difficult and the language itself has no foothold in the country: people have never heard it in the shops or hotels, as they once heard French and then English after the war. So at first there was a sort of psychological barrier. But bit by bit it disappeared. The number of graduates of Soviet higher educational establishments is growing in the country, and many more Syrians study Russian at home. There is a week of Soviet films once a year and television shows them far more often. Classics, among them Tolstoy and Chekhov, were known and admired in the past as well, at any rate by intellectuals: the society described by those authors is familiar to the Syrians from their own past and present. But novels and stories written today, Dr Hussein believes, are becoming more accessible as the progress of Syrian society gains momentum.

Similar ideas were voiced by literature and theatre critic Subhi Kurdi:

"There are quite a few good translations and theatre productions, but there also are fiascos. For instance, one of Gelman's plays was not merely translated into Arabic but also set in a Syrian milieu, with names and attributes changed as well. Situations immediately became artificial, and small wonder in view of differences between the motivation of human behaviour and the social environment in the two societies. But generally speaking, plays by Gelman, Rozov and Arbuzov are popular and are produced quite often. Especial popularity is enjoyed by Rasputin, whom I as a critic think an outstanding writer. I also believe that it would be especially useful for our readers to get an idea of 'problem' novels and stories, including critical ones. I think that the literature of socialist realism has made great strides in this field in recent years. This phenomenon is not of importance to your people alone."

Indeed, is it not understanding of each other's problems and concerns that brings peoples closer together? They want to know better the life and problems of a partner and friend in order to be able to count on him in fair weather and in time of trial.

This mutual knowledge and ensuing trust are all the more important in view of the paramount common task of ensuring world peace. In the Middle East, moreover, a lasting and fair peace is especially hard to achieve because the region faces a two-pronged threat from the U.S.-Israeli strategic alliance. Syria is one of the primary targets for their joint pressure, as Washington and Tel Aviv believe that once the country is toppled, the road will be clear to establish imperialist-Zionist dominance in the whole of the Arab world, and in the boundless expanses from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. The consequences of such plans to global security are plain.

That is why it is so important that Syria, relying on its friends, is standing fast. Moreover, despite all the dangers, difficulties and obstacles, it is making progress, setting an example in many ways for other emergent states which enjoy far greater peace, and more important still, exerting growing influence on the situation in the Middle East—and has indeed been doing so for several decades. Hence, it is the Syrian people's experience, given all they have lived through, that is the main source of their energy and dynamism and their confidence in the future; it also is an important guarantee of this future.

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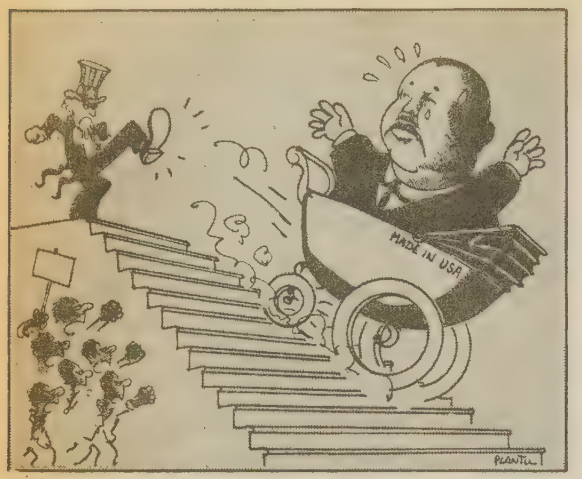

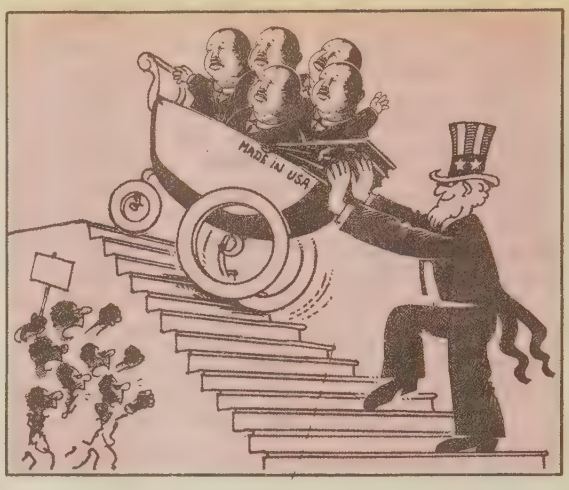

GUIGNOL

The theme for the cartoon is borrowed from Le Monde of Paris though we entirely disagree with the idea. After all, it wasn't Uncle Sam but the people of Haiti who booted the bestial Baby Doc out of the country. Because only now has Washington realized that the curtain has been rung down on the "nightmare republic." After 29 years of nursing first François Duvalier and then his scion, Jean-Claude, has it at last decided to move. It shoved the "fat pig" into a U.S. airforce plane along with his bodyguards and half a billion dollars, and deposited him in France. The French indignantly demonstrated with placards saying that France was no garbage can for U.S. political refuse.

The French authorities are in a fix. The time limit on their "hospitality" has run out. However, no country in the world wants to give Baby Doc asylum for either love or money. After all, countries too are known by the company they keep.

The entire "free world" is wondering where the "fat pig" will have his next orgy. Much less is being said about what is now happening in Haiti. Our cartoonist Nikolai Shcherbakov aptly comments on that in his interpretation of the French cartoonist's theme. The Duvalier regime without Duvalier is being hastily reinforced. Before Baby Doc had had time to shake the Haitian dust off his feet the U.S. State Department had already provided newsmen with ready-made biographies of the men in the reactionary takeover junta, which is, to believe the U.S. State Department, "highly democratic." They are army officers whose careers had been advanced by Baby Doc for faithful service to his fascist regime. General Henri Namphy, the current head of state, was chief of staff of Baby Doc's army. He has been ordered to use the mailed fist to entrench "democracy" with an eye above all to what Washington has termed the paramount concerns of army and business quarters, in other words, the U.S. monopolies. Equally "highly democratic" are Colonel William Regala, inspector general of Baby Doc's armed forces, and Colonel Max Valles, the chief of Baby Doc's personal bodyguard, his No. 1 Gorilla. There is a third "highly creditable colonel," Prosper Avril, who turned the anti-fascist youth demonstrations in Gonaïves last November into a bloodbath.

Pinochet has already solemnly recognized the new regime.

A curfew has been ordered plus brutal reprisals against all who protest against Duvalierism without Duvalier. To save the tontons macoutes from well-merited retribution they have hastily been reclothed in army uniforms. The guignol goes on.

V. KHROMOV

LIBERTY RACKET

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But nothing lasts
now the time has

NOT MUCH OF A CHANGE

On February 12 a man who could hardly have been called "uninvited" arrived in Yugoslavia from the U.S. For a long time the Yugoslav government had demanded the extradition of Andrija Artukovic, a war criminal and nazi collaborator, who had taken refuge across the Atlantic. At last this lawful demand was met. The criminal was brought to Zagreb where he will stand trial. Who this man is our readers will know from our issue No. 4 for 1985.

Does this mean a change in the stand of the American judiciary? Neal Sher, director of the U.S. Justice Department's special investigations office, claimed that the extradition was his department's "greatest victory." Over whom, though? Over American justice itself. And a solitary victory at that. So far there have been many, many more defeats. Why, indeed, did it take 35 years for Artukovic to be extradited? Why was the Romanian war criminal Valerian Trifa able to spend thirty peaceful years in the U.S., before he was expelled? Why has only one of the 150 criminals about whom Moscow has provided Washington with relevant data ever been handed over to the U.S.S.R.? Nor is it only we who put these questions. A proposal has been submitted to Congress to ins
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statue and the island upon which it stands to be refurbished. It is reported that under the skilful management of Lido Anthony Iacocca, chairman of the board of directors of the powerful Chrysler corporation, a private foundation has amassed upwards of $230 million for the projected overhaul.

Business is business, but sentiment still has its place, which is why Iacocca, grateful to the Statue of Liberty for having welcomed his immigrant parents to America, decided to head the campaign for money to pay for the statue's repair. He also headed the official government renovation commission until, not long ago, someone advised the Republican Administration to sack him. However, the businessman has made considerable capital out of his tender concern for liberty. Hitherto he has not been a political figure. Now he is. In a joint opinion poll with the Washington Post, ABC television discovered that many Democrats and independents believe that at the next elections Iacocca may well run for the presidency. Meanwhile the worried Republicans keep saying that Iacocca's dismissal has no political significance and no connection with the increasingly frequent mention of his name as a possible Democratic presidential candidate.

So what, we hear you ask. Is there really a link between the renovation of the Statue of Liberty and the presidency? The answer is yes. Both are intimately tied up with Big Business.

M. FROLOV

JOBLESS, HOPELESS

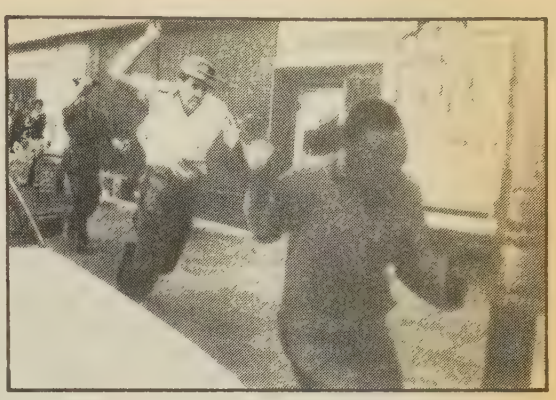
Though only 24, Marco Schall of Bonn has already had more than his fair share of trouble. He has been to gaol, is now a drug addict, and has tasted unemployment to the bitter dregs, queueing again and again outside the labour exchange.

Over the past five years the number of people under the age of 25 who are unemployed has almost doubled in the Common Market countries with 35, 28 and 44 per cent of young people out of work in Italy, France and Spain respectively.

"Many of Europe's unemployed youths are strangely apathetic," the American magazine Time observed. But is this so surprising? The absence of future does not arouse enthusiasm. "Unless you've been unemployed yourself," says Maxine Bird, 20, of Wolverhampton in Britain's West Midlands, "you can't begin to think what it's like. I got really depressed."

That unemployed young people are more prone to drug addiction, suicide and crime is common knowledge. In Belgium the number of suicides aged between 15 and 24 doubled between 1970 and 1981. If you are not wanted, why go on living?

Y. KARAULOV



JUST LIKE HOME

"Visit South Africa! A special tour for police! Only a few places left." Curious, an enquirer phoned IPD Tours and introduced himself as a policeman named Fuhrmann. Presently he received a circular telling him that in South Africa the agency has its own office which maintained "close and cordial contacts" with the local police.

It further transpired that the agency has excellent links with the police in the F.R.G. itself. "This specialized tour," the circular says, "is the result of cooperation between the South African and West German police services. The programme includes visits to a police dog-training school and separate police training colleges for blacks, Indians and coloureds."

When Herr Fuhrmann failed to find answers in the circular to other questions of interest, taking the advice of an IPD agent he phoned Herr Landes of the Federal Criminal Police, who had been to South Africa to negotiate details of a "special group tour." The official was not reticent. He explained that he had close ties with South African police officers, and declared that everything the newspapers were saying about the supposedly brutal supposed reprisals by supposed racists against blacks was fabrication pure and simple. He added that in the F.R.G. itself the police clashed now and then with demonstrators, didn't they? He said his friends would be only too delighted to welcome their West German colleagues.

The person making enquiries under the name of Fuhrmann was a reporter from the student magazine Rote Blätter, which published the full text of his talk with Landes, along with other revelations. It had learned that the Department for Safeguarding the Constitution was communicating information about all persons leaving the F.R.G. for South Africa to the South African secret police thereby helping trap opponents of apartheid. As one Bundestag deputy sarcastically observed, in South Africa West German guardians of law and order feel "quite at home."

A. MIKHAILOV

This is how the South African police—colleagues of the West German "tourists"—operate.

Photo from Jeune Afrique (France)

French court would not have resolved to try Barbie for all his crimes instead of satisfying itself with a "concise indictment." Public opinion has also compelled the West German judiciary to reopen the case against Ernst Thaelmann's killers. In the fight for justice we must always set our sights on the maximum, not the minimum.

Immediately after the war the Allied leaders said they would pursue the nazi criminals to the uttermost ends of the earth. Now they don't have to go that far. All they need is to realize that if the criminals responsible for the last war are not brought to justice there will be no deterrent to criminals who may unleash a future war.

L. BEZYMENSKY

PROSPECTS FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Academician OLEG BOGOMOLOV

What we would like the future to have in store for Europe are first of all guaranteed security, prosperity and cooperation between its nations. It is our ardent wish that military confrontation be done away with for good, giving way to good-neighbourliness, ever broader political and economic cooperation among states, and extensive human contacts. Is all this possible, given present realities: a disunited Europe, huge stockpiles of weapons (including nuclear), and an unstable world economy?

Most of us take an optimistic view and believe that Europe's future will be one of peace and prosperity. Nonetheless, both the experience of older generations and the realism prompted by our troubled times make us cautious in attempting to predict the future course of events.

The fate of Europe is decided not only by the nations that comprise it. It also depends on global international processes, which are causing the gravest concern today. The plan for nuclear disarmament on a global scale, put forward in the statement by Mikhail Gorbachev, offers prospects also for the European nations with whose aspirations they fully accord.

Time to Remove Barriers

The Geneva summit has had a wholesome effect on the political and psychological climate in Europe. The continent's future will depend chiefly on confidence-building between countries of the two systems. Confidence means the assurance that neither side will take action detrimental to the other in whatever form. Confidence means a benevolent attitude to one another, readiness to discuss problems calmly and find sensible compromises.

The indisputable fact that much in the world depends on the relations between the two great powers—the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A.—in no way detracts from the role the European states have to play in world affairs. The cradle of world civilization, our continent, which has contributed so greatly to the progress of science, technology, culture and advanced social thought, can give an example of how to resolve the most complex problems of today and carry out the principles and policy of détente. The Helsinki conference is a corroboration of this.

The future of the European community of nations lies in the further deepening of the Helsinki process, despite all the difficulties and obstacles still in its way. It is important to promote the dialogue so as to achieve better mutual understanding and correctly assess each other's interests. The more often we meet and talk at various levels, the less mistrust and hostility there will be.

Naturally, there are many matters on which we disagree. Will this always be the case? In our opinion it is high time that barriers in the way of Europe-wide cooperation were removed and bridges built. These bridges may differ in design, but all of them are to serve the same purpose—international rapprochement. What should unite us, first and foremost, is our common responsibility for peace.

Building a new Europe presupposes the development of the appropriate political and economic infrastructure which is to facilitate this endeavour. There exist several forums concerned with the problems of strengthening European security. Confidence-building measures are discussed in Stockholm, while troop and arms reduction in Central Europe are negotiated in Vienna. Representatives from the European states which took part in the Helsinki conference are to meet in 1986. The U.N. Economic Commission for Europe has an important part to play in resolving our continent's problems.

Though they have been insufficiently effective so far, measures such as these contribute to the formation of the future structure and mechanism of European security and cooperation. This structure will probably have to be modified, and new forms of political, economic and cultural cooperation sought, with European realities and the need to strengthen all-European unity taken into account.

What is the future of Europe likely to be?

The answer to this question probably lies in an analysis not only of current political but also of economic trends.

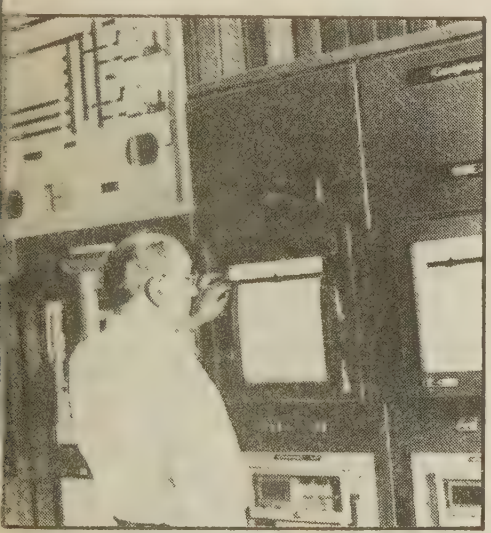
East and West

Following the 1980-82 crisis, the worst in postwar years, the capitalist economy recovered slightly. In 1985, however, growth rates slowed down again (especially in the U.S.), and American economists expect this trend to persist in 1986. The problems of unemployment and inflation confronting the member states of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have lost none of their acuteness. Unemployment figures have reached a postwar high (down slightly in the U.S. in 1984-85, they continue to rise in Western Europe). Over the last few years prices in OECD member countries have been going up at a rate which, though less sharp than previously, nonetheless averaged 4.5 per cent a year.

Military spending remains a heavy burden on the U.S. budget which is balanced out by a growing national debt. Half of the $200 billion deficit is covered by the influx of bank credits from abroad, which has resulted in excessively high interest on credits and in an artificially inflated dollar exchange rate. This makes imports to the U.S. (from Europe too) cheaper, and adversely affects the competitiveness of American exports. Hence the growing U.S. balance of trade and payments deficit. Once an international creditor, the world's richest country has become a debtor. Taking advantage of its privileged position in the international financial and trade system, the U.S. largely buys its well-being on credit. The gap in growth rates and employment dynamics between Western Europe and the U.S. is due not so much to West European products becoming less competitive (although this is also partly the case) as to the peculiarities of the international financial mechanism.

If the financial mechanism continues to work to the advantage of the U.S. alone, there will be no avoiding an explosion which will hit all countries, West European included, very hard, indeed. Of special danger under the circumstances is the developing countries' enormous foreign debt, which has topped $1,000 billion. The solvency of these countries is most problematic; furthermore, the payment or, at least, reduction of the debt is hampered by the protectionist measures taken by the U.S., Japan and the EEC.

Protectionism has assumed global proportions and is being practised in ever more refined forms. This interferes with the improvement of the world economic situation and the development of East-West relations. The use of trade sanctions and technological embargoes as a means of bringing political pressure to bear on other countries is especially to be censured. By tightening restrictions in their foreign trade, the U.S. and West European countries may lose their markets, and it is hard to keep business activity up without expanding trade in all directions.



On New Year's eve of 1984 Siberian gas piped from a distance of about 5,000 kilometres, activated instruments at a French control and measuring station located near the western border of the F.R.G. The fulfilment of the 25-year agreement on the delivery of Soviet natural gas to France had begun.

Western Europe has taken up the U.S. and Japanese challenge and is bent on catching up with these two countries in vital spheres of technology. This effort may well pay off, improving prospects for economic development and helping offset negative economic processes on a global scale. East-West economic relationships in Europe should develop along the same lines.

While being affected, to a greater or lesser degree, by global economic processes and the economic situation in Western Europe, the European CMEA member states are governed by economic laws of their own and come up against entirely different problems. Thanks to annual and medium-term plans, these countries' economic development rate is steadier and more confident than that of the market economy of the West. Whereas Western Europe's annual gross domestic product grew by 2.2-2.3 per cent in 1984-85, the figure for the CMEA member states was 3.3-3.5 per cent. The Soviet Union and a number of other CMEA member states have succeeded in arresting the slowing down of their economic growth rates observed at the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties. The task now is to speed up development by improving economic management, making further scientific and technological progress, restructuring industry, and other measures. Investments are to grow, and the share of accumulation is to increase in the national income of countries in which it has markedly shrunk over the past few years. The retooling and modernization of industry are bound to have an increasing effect on the CMEA countries' development rate.

The plans of the European CMEA member states are linked, in large measure, with ever closer integrationist cooperation between them. They take part in major industrial, scientific and engineering projects, which are comparable with only a few similar projects in the world, such as the joint construction of oil and gas mains, power transmission lines, atomic power stations, and ore-dressing mills. Furthermore, CMEA member states practise large-scale specialization and co-production in such fields as electronics, atomic power engineering, electrical engineering, ball-bearing manufacturing, and so on. The recent extraordinary CMEA session adopted the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress of the CMEA countries for the period of up to 2000. Its joint fulfilment will bring these countries onto a par with the highest international standards in the key spheres of science and technology.

Mutual Benefit

The economic situation in the capitalist and socialist worlds influences—albeit in different ways—the progress of business cooperation between countries of the two different systems. East-West trade constitutes a mere 3-4 per cent of the world's total. Therefore, the influence of their trade links on global economic processes is insignificant. On the other hand, these links depend to a considerable extent on the state of affairs in the West's economy and foreign trade, characterized by instability. One should also bear in mind a certain discrepancy in the respective significance of these links for the economic development of East and West. Over the past few years socialist countries have done 26 to 30 per cent of their foreign trade with industrialized capitalist states. The proportion of West European countries in trade with the socialist world is much small-

The newest metallurgical plant in Byelorussia was built jointly by Austrian companies and the state industrial concern VOEST-Alpine. Soviet-Austrian trade has more than doubled over the past five years.

TASS photos

er (although they are interested in trade with socialist countries for economic and political reasons).

In the first half of the seventies, trade turnover between the European CMEA countries and the West grew fast; in the latter half of the seventies the growth slowed down considerably, and in the early eighties East-West trade stagnated. Now this trade is tending to expand again, but how lasting this tendency will be is anybody's guess.

From the angle of purely economic prerequisites and interests, growth potential is reasonably high on both sides. Given an improvement in the political climate, the West's share in the foreign trade of the CMEA member states may increase.

Although the CMEA member states have succeeded in improving the balance of payments with the West and bringing their hard-currency debt to it under control, many other important problems associated with business cooperation are still awaiting their solution. In particular, it is necessary to improve the commodity pattern of East-West trade. Fuels, raw materials and food still predominate in the CMEA's exports to the West, accounting for 75 per cent, the proportion of manufactured goods constituting only 25 per cent and, specifically, of machines and equipment, a mere seven per cent. The prospects for East-West trade depend on the extent to which this pattern is improved.

As they strengthen their collective scientific and technological potential, the CMEA countries do not seek to cut themselves off from the rest of the world in the field of science and technology—and their June 1984 economic summit reaffirmed this. It is plain that exchanges and contacts in this and many other fields are inevitable. The single most important concern of CMEA member states is invulnerability in the vital spheres of scientific and technological progress.

Intensification of economic progress will add to their import-export potential (vis-à-vis the West, in particular) and alter the pattern of supply and demand. The CMEA countries will step up the efficacy of their imports by increasing the purchases of machine systems and production lines required to retool their mechanical engineering, light and food industries, update their industrial and agricultural infrastructure and introduce industrialized methods in agriculture. The practice of building medium and small industrial plants jointly with Western companies, especially on a compensatory basis, holds good promise.

The CMEA countries favour the improvement of worldwide economic relations through a strict observance of the principle of equality, mutual benefit, respect for each other's interests, non-discrimination, and the abandonment of the practice of using trade as a means of political pressure. The futility of all sorts of sanctions and embargoes is admitted increasingly frequently by reasonable people in the West. For instance, the authors of the book "Economic War or Détente? The Political Outcome of Economic Relations Between East and West," published in the F.R.G. in 1984, are of the opinion that "if both sides are equally strong they can damage but not punish each other."

It would be hard to disagree with this conclusion. It is high time to go over from the stick and carrot policy in international economic relations to one based on mutual benefit rather than causing detriment to each other.

It is necessary to search together for ways of regulating the world community's economic life and providing favourable conditions for trade, the restructuring of world production and trade, a rational utilization of raw material and energy resources, and the protection of the environment. It would be useful to work out an effective reform of the international currency system, to establish normal contractual relations between the CMEA and the EEC, and take confidence-building measures in the economic sphere as well. The problems of the immunity of all countries, including those in Europe, against any disturbances in the system of world economic relations are steadily gaining in urgency. Our state calls attention to this in the United Nations.

The CMEA countries' and the CMEA Secretariat's moves to normalize relations with the EEC are prompted not so much by business motives as by the need to strengthen European security, build confidence, and gradually overcome the disunity of Europe. To date, the discrepancy in East-West trade is becoming increasingly pronounced owing to the EEC's tendency to deal with each CMEA member state individually. The CMEA is not recognized as the coordinator of its member states' activities and the protector of their interests. All proposals to sign a joint CMEA-EEC declaration providing for bilateral contacts and outlining their tentative spheres get bogged down in talks.

I am certain, however, that a secure future for Europe presupposes the intensification of integration processes not only in the East and the West, but also the extension of contacts between individual states and their communities on a continent-wide scale.

Business cooperation with socialist countries, which develop their economies according to five-year plans and long-term programmes, can bring an element of stability and strength to the foreign economic links established by Western countries, especially those in Europe.

The plans the CMEA countries have drawn up for the next five-year period (1986-90) provide a reliable point of departure for business circles interested in broadening long-term trade and economic links with the socialist countries on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit and in seeking new intensive forms of East-West cooperation. ■

PEOPLE ON THE WORLD SCENE

ILIE VADUVA

Romanian Foreign Minister Ilie Vaduva was born on July 21, 1934, in the district of Gorj. After graduating from the Bucharest Academy of Economics in 1958, he taught at the academy, of which he became pro-rector and later rector. He holds a doctorate in economics.

In his student years and after finishing the academy Ilie Vaduva worked in the association of Communist students and was elected to the Central Committee of the Union of Communist Youth. In 1961 he became a member of the Romanian Communist Party, in 1979, alternate member and in 1984, member of its Central Committee.

Ilie Vaduva is a deputy of the Grand National Assembly (parliament) of Romania. He was vice-chairman of the Assembly's committee on foreign affairs and international economic cooperation, and later vice-chairman of the Assembly and chairman of the Romanian group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Ilie Vaduva is a member of the Romanian national committee "Scientists and Peace," of the National Council on Science and Technology, of leading bodies of the State Planning Committee, the Ministry of Education and Instruction, the Academy of Social and Political Sciences and the Central Institute of Economic Research. He is the author of a large number of scholarly works.

In November 1985 Ilie Vaduva was appointed Foreign Minister.

SOVIET-AMERICAN TRADE RELATIONS: THE NEED FOR AN INITIATIVE

WILLIAM MILLER
President, Infotrade International (U.S.A.)

There has been much comment about the results of the Geneva summit and prospects for improved Soviet-American relations. The meeting produced no dramatic changes—few expected it would. Nevertheless, Geneva was a hopeful new beginning, and our world is perhaps marginally safer because of it.

Political and military issues, on which the Soviet Union and United States have been divided for much of the past four decades, were not the only topics discussed at the highest level. It is important to remember that genuine, long-term international security depends more on economic growth and material well-being than on arms.

Equitable trade relations, based on equal treatment of trading partners, are essential to normalized political relations. Improved political relations between the United States and China—nations which did not have diplomatic relations a decade ago—exemplifies the role of trade as a stabilizing force.

It would be simplistic to presume that liberalized trade will resolve the many and significant differences dividing the United States and the Soviet Union. Conversely, the gap between us can never be bridged without strong economic ties. We need not wait for political solutions to progress with improved trade relations.

The Soviet Union is one of a very few nations with which the United States has a positive trade balance, and there is consensus among U.S. businessmen and their Soviet counterparts that the U.S.S.R. affords a potentially fertile market for many American products. America labours under an appalling trade imbalance, which, according to preliminary estimates, reached $150 billion in 1985. Our national self-interest obliges us to take the initiative to normalize Soviet-American trade relations. To that end, the United States must be prepared to initiate corrective measures, including adoption of realistic export controls.

U.S. export controls often ignore the fact that the United States does not have a monopoly on advanced technology. Obviously, our national security compels us to restrict exports of products and technology with strategic implications. But sales opportunities in low- and medium-technology products are routinely lost to European and Japanese firms because of unrealistic export controls. This fact-of-life, long known to the business community, is now under study in official circles as well.

When formulating export controls, "reasonableness" is only one half the equation—the other half is "reliability." For American firms to compete successfully on lucrative long-term projects, both buyer and seller must be assured that export controls will not tighten in midstream in response to policy changes. Export control laws must be amended to guarantee that export licences, once granted for a given project or sale, will not be invalidated except for clearly defined and compelling reasons of national security.

In seeking expanded access to Soviet markets, we must be prepared to extend reciprocal trade privileges to Soviet products. This means we must be willing to accord most-favoured-nation (MFN) status to Soviet exports.

Current U.S. law, in the form of the so-called Jackson-Vanick Amendment, precludes the extension of MFN or trade credits until the Soviet Union modifies certain internal policies, notably in the area of emigration.

To discuss the motivations behind the Jackson-Vanick Amendment, and the Soviet response, would be a digression. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the fact that Jackson-Vanick has failed to alter Soviet policy. By now it should be evident that the internal policies of a super-power cannot be dictated by another nation—not even another superpower. We should acknowledge this reality, and modify U.S. law to give the President authority to resume MFN relations and Export-Import Bank credits with the Soviet Union.

Some Western economists have commented that MFN would not help the Soviet Union to penetrate the American market. This is conjectural and, to be frank, not an American problem. It will be the Soviet Union's responsibility, in a liberalized trade environment, to build its market in the United States. Soviet suppliers must be prepared to compete—on the basis of price, quality, and other factors—with domestic and foreign products available to U.S. purchasers. We cannot guarantee success to Soviet marketing efforts, but we must afford an opportunity to succeed based upon equal access.

It is important to recognize that the centrally planned economy of the Soviet Union does not necessarily give Soviet products an unfair advantage. This point has been noted by sophisticated observers of the international trade system, and is reflected in a former U.S. Treasury official's comments before Congress. "Our entire trading system is supposed to be based on comparative advantage," he said. "We should encourage it ... if Poland has coal it should mine and export coal. If Hungary has a technological base in electrical light bulb manufacture, it should exploit that advantage ... Why should American consumers be denied the ability to buy their goods? If there is any 'unfairness' it is to our own people."

Eventually, trade between the Soviet Union and the United States will expand to dimensions befitting the size of each nation's economy. The sooner trade relations are normalized, the easier it will be to defuse other issues which divide us.

HOPE STREET, RUHR VALLEY

Talking to Ruhr Communists

The tangle of pipes and silver tanks suggests a small oil refinery. In fact, oil here is not a raw material, but an end product obtained from coal.

We—a group of journalists from socialist countries—are visiting an experimental coal liquefaction plant in Bottrop in the Ruhr. The idea of building such a plant arose in the mid-1970s when oil prices began to rocket. Ruhrkohle, a coal concern, took it up. The Federal government and the government of North Rhine-Westphalia footed the bill. This year the experiment will be completed as scheduled. Where do they go from here?

The situation in the oil market now differs dramatically from that in the 1970s. Supply outstrips demand and prices are falling. However, this cannot last, many people here believe. The world's limited oil reserves are much smaller than those of coal. "Oil starvation" is only a matter of time. That is why coal liquefaction is a promising business, especially in the Ruhr where it would help resuscitate the coal industry and ensure thousands of jobs for many years to come.

Actually, prospects are not quite so bright. The building of a major liquid fuel complex, planned after the completion of the experiment, has been postponed indefinitely. The fate of the Bottrop plant itself is uncertain. It may turn out to be uneconomic and if it is dismantled, which cannot be ruled out, it will mean that 300 million marks will have gone down the drain, though that, of course, is not a matter of grave concern for the owners of Ruhrkohle. After all, the experiment was paid for with taxpayers' money.

The Ruhr Does Have a Future

"The project that began with the building of the Bottrop plant could give a boost to the development of the Ruhr," says Heinz Czymek, member of the Presidium of the Board of the German Communist Party and chairman of the GCP board in the Ruhr-Westphalia region. "But it is now being sacrificed to the interests of the concerns. A considerable proportion of the shares in Ruhrkohle has passed into the hands of the power companies VEBA and RWE, which are not interested in keeping the coal industry alive."

We are talking in the town of Essen, in the office of the regional GCP on a street with the symbolic name of Hope Street. Ruhr Communists have invited us to take a closer look at the work of their organization as it prepares for the party's Eighth Congress in May. It was they who showed us round the Bottrop pilot plant.

Before the congress, the party's local organizations are discussing the theses proposed by the GCP Board, entitled "New Issues in the Struggle for Peace and Jobs, for Democratic Change." One passage in the paper reads: "The country needs an alternative economic and social policy that would serve the interests of the working people." This policy should provide an alternative to the course of the present coalition government, which serves the interests of Big Business. Proceeding from the theses of the GCP, the Communists of the Ruhr and progressive scientists have proposed a programme for the economic and social development of the region.

A lot is being said and written in the Federal Republic about the crisis of the Ruhr. Everybody agrees that the country's "industrial heart" is beating more and more weakly. The past quarter-century has seen the two leading local industries, coal and steel, run to seed. Unemployment is much higher than in most other parts of the country. Here one in every six or seven people are out of work, while the average national level is one in ten.

"We disagree with those who claim that the Ruhr is doomed to become a huge industrial museum," says Mr Czymek. "The decline of the area is not a consequence of 'natural economic laws.' It is the shortsighted policy geared to the interests of the monopolies that has brought on the crisis. It can be overcome if there is a change of policy. We categorically disagree with claims that steel and coal have outlived themselves. The Ruhr does have a future."

What do the Communists propose?

First, not to curtail but to develop the coal and steel industries. Their programme envisages a progressive increase in the annual coal output so that in a decade from now it should be 20 million tons upon the present figure. Coal will serve as the basis for an integrated hot water supply system. Coal will also be used in new power plants and as a raw material for reprocessing into oil and gas.

Second, the Communists advocate a special employment programme for the Ruhr which would cost an estimated 5,000 million marks annually.

Third, these plans can only be carried out if major banks, energy and metallurgical concerns are nationalized and workers are given a bigger say in management.

"We are not building castles in the air," stresses Mr Czymek. "Our programme is economically based and proceeds from the real development needs of our area. Of course, it differs markedly from similar programmes put forward by other parties, including the Social Democratic Party, which is committed to a policy based on the notorious "social partnership" principle. But we are prepared to enter into dialogue with the Social Democrats as well. Some of our proposals are similar to or identical with the demands of the trade unions. In putting forward our programme, we reaffirm our wish to cooperate with all sections of the workers' movement.

A Thousand "Trifles"

While our talk in Hope Street in Essen centred on prospects for the country's largest industrial region, our conversation with Communist deputies on the Bottrop city council at the Municipal Hall dealt with the city's problems.

The meeting was presided over by the same Heinz Czymek, this time, however, in his capacity of chairman of the Communist Party at the city magistracy. Czymek is well known in Bottrop. His political "education" began in a coal mine and continued in jail where he served two years for taking part in protests against the remilitarization of the Federal Republic. After his release he was unable to find employment as a miner. He learned the trade of journalist and photographer. In 1969 he was among those who put out the first issues of the GCP's newspaper Unsere Zeit. The same year he and another Communist were elected to the city council. At the next election the Communists

secured four seats, and then five. They consolidated their success in the communal elections of 1979 and 1984.

Just how much influence do Communists exert on the city's life? Does their small group of deputies make a difference? Of course, room for manoeuvre on the predominantly Social Democrat and Christian Democrat city council is limited. But the Communists' strength lies in their ability to express public opinion and the demands of the people. It is the people's interests that the Communists represent on the city council. Their persistent efforts bear fruit.

"We in Bottrop boast some achievements that they do not have in other cities," says Communist deputy Siggi Rutz. "For instance, those on welfare get higher Christmas bonuses. Schools in Bottrop are better equipped than in most other places."

Some people might say that these are trifles. But then municipal policy is made up of a thousand trifles. How is welfare distributed? How does public transport work? Are there enough playgrounds for children? Are roads in good repair? How is garbage disposal organized? All these are questions of no small importance for the townspeople. Communist deputies insist that every issue be resolved in the interests of the majority of the population.

When the city fathers decided to build a new office block, the Communists said that Bottrop with its 100,000 people has no theatre and that this should be a higher priority. Those without cars often have to walk to work. Communists demand that bus services should start earlier and end later.

To be closer to the people, to know their needs and help them as best they can—these are the principles of the Communist deputies. While maintaining their own position, they seek to cooperate with other political forces in the city parliament, notably with the Social Democrats. Since its foundation, the GCP has made cooperation with the SDP in the interests of the working class and the whole people one of its principles. Establishing such cooperation is an exceedingly difficult task. For a long time the Social Democrats would have no truck with the Communists. The situation is changing now. The SDP has revised many of its attitudes and has agreed to some important demands of the peace movement and trade unions.

The winds of change are blowing in Bottrop too. The Communists and the Social Democrats recently voted together for a resolution in support of the trade unions, which oppose the government bill to curb their right to strike. Oberburgomaster Ernst Wilczok (SDP) who once dreamt of driving the Communists out of the city council, now has to heed their opinion.

They have a long way to go before relations between the two parties are genuinely trusting and comradely, but the Communists are aware that the stronger the GCP and the greater its influence at grass roots, the more chance there is of cooperation with the Social Democrats and united action by the working class.

Thälmann Recruiting Campaign

As the GCP decided at its Seventh Congress, a special campaign to recruit new members was launched on September 1 to last till April 16, the centenary of the birth of Ernst Thälmann, leader of the Communist Party of Germany.

Michael Gerber, chairman of the district board of the GCP in Bottrop, told me that 28 new members had joined the party in the past two weeks. What brings them into the GCP's ranks?

Michael introduced me to three young Communists who joined the party in January. Renate Ziemmek is a housewife. Her husband, a crane operator, has been out of work for four years. She has two school-age children. Asked why she joined the GCP, Renate replied, "because the Communists do a lot for the common people." She was particularly impressed with the "Stop the Price Rise" campaign. To demonstrate that the prices were jacked up by the monopolies, Communists sold potatoes they had bought directly from farmers at prices that were, of course, much lower than those in the shops. Ludger Podbelsek is an apprentice. His mother is a member of the GCP and he himself has been a member of the Socialist German Working Youth for several years. Joining the GCP was a natural decision for him. Ludger is particularly interested in the struggle for peace and is getting ready to take part in a discussion on American "star wars" plans. In contrast, the parents of Claus Grabowski, a young unemployed worker, were violently opposed to his joining the Communist Party. They have now broken off relations with their son. Claus made his final decision after hearing a radio discussion in which GCP chairman Herbert Mies took part.

Some people might ask if it is not perhaps too easy to become a member of the GCP and if it does not open the door to people who have no business being there. To this one should say, first, that one needs great courage to become a Communist. GCP membership does not afford any privileges and is fraught with a lot of confrontation and unpleasantness both at work and in the family. Every Communist is lumbered with the official label of "enemy of the constitution" and "Moscow agent." Second, the party organizations are aware that new members need to be introduced to the ABC of politics, and should be assigned tasks they are capable of and enjoy doing. In short, they should be integrated into the party, as they say here.

Ruhr workers demand jobs.

TASS photo

It is still too early to give a final tally of the results of the Thälmann recruiting campaign. But it is already clear that it is a success. Party organizations have noticeably grown, some have doubled their membership. Many new cells have been set up in industry and residential neighbourhoods. This means that the party will convene for its Eighth Congress strengthened and enriched with experience in the struggle for influence among the masses.

A. TOLPEGIN
Our Own Correspondent

FROM THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT TO SOCIALIST SELF-GOVERNMENT

ANATOLY BUTENKO, Ph. D.

The rapid evolution of the life of society is constantly facing scientists, politicians, government and public leaders with ever new problems relating to the ways of perfecting Soviet society and the forms this process will take. In considering these problems, attention is mostly focussed on the need to accelerate economic development. The economy is of course the foundation of social progress, but for all that the old adage that man does not live by bread alone must be borne in mind. Auspicious political conditions, democratism of social life, are not only the guarantee of the successful accomplishment of socio-economic tasks but also the prerequisite of individual self-fulfilment.

The draft of the new text of the CPSU Programme points out that the strategic objective of the Soviet Communist Party is "the perfecting of Soviet democracy, ever fuller practice of socialist self-government by the people." Developing this fundamental thesis, the Programme sees the necessary precondition of self-government not only in upholding the interests of the working people but also in their direct participation in the administration of the affairs of society.

The Power, Interests and Will of the Working People

Long before the rise of socialism as a practical reality, Marx, Engels and Lenin gave thought to how the new society would be administered, through what organization forms the will of the working people would be expressed, and what guarantees there would be of their needs and requirements being met.

Although Marx and Engels did not leave writings dealing specifically with problems of administration under socialism, they examined these questions in summing up the experience of the Paris Commune and in their critique of the anarchist views of Mikhail Bakunin. (Bakunin came out against what he called "Marx's programme of state communism" and declared war on "domination, government tutelage and authority" of any kind. Attacking the idea of the proletariat wielding state power, he maintained that so long as the state existed there would be domination and, hence, also "slavery." Since the entire people could not stand at the helm of state, he contended, what would emerge would be a system of government "of the vast majority of the popular masses by a privileged minority.")

Criticizing Bakunin's distortion of the substance of scientific communism, Marx underscored not only the temporary character of the political dominance of the proletariat but also the fact that it would be directed exclusively against the enemies of the working people. As regards the relations between the "governors" and the "governed," both Marx and Engels, contrary to what Bakunin said, were fully aware of the complexity of the problem and visualized its solution along lines altogether different from those conceived by the ideologue of anarchism.

In many of their writings Marx and Engels draw a distinct dividing line between political power that professes to speak for the people but is actually alien to them and oppresses them and political power that truly serves the working masses. More, they stressed that not every governmental power that serves the interests of the people can be said to be vested in the people. Marx and Engels held that the paramount condition of the existence of the new society would be "true government by the people"; indeed, this is their cardinal contribution to the elaboration of the problem. Drawing on the experience of the Paris Commune, Marx wrote, for instance, that in a society based on collectivism government of the people by the people—in other words, popular self-government—is bound to assert itself.

The writings of the founders of scientific communism thus treat of the principles of self-government, the substance of which consists in the solution of social problems becoming the direct concern of the working people no longer subordinated to any power but the power of their own association, as Lenin later formulated it.

On the eve of the October Revolution Lenin repeatedly stressed that the future society would be a society governed not only in the interests of the working people, but by the working people themselves. To define precisely whose interests are being upheld and whose will is being given effect to by governmental power at different stages of social development, Lenin drew a distinction between "government **for the working people**" and "government **by the working people.**" The development of the socialist revolution in Russia, and later in other countries, the actual process of socialist transformation, has fully confirmed the farsightedness and profundity of the Leninist approach.

Clearly, the basic precondition of successful building of socialism is the winning of power by the working class, the working people. But even after taking over power they are not in a position to direct social progress themselves, en masse, so to say. For this reason, and also because the political consciousness of the masses is not yet sufficiently high, the system of administration in the initial period takes the form of government **for the working people.** Later, however, Lenin held, under the leadership of a staunch, united, revolutionary vanguard **all** will learn "to administer and actually do independently administer social production, independently keep accounts and exercise control over the parasites, the sons of the wealthy, the swindlers and other 'guardians of capitalist traditions.'"

Experience has shown that social development tends to assume ever more complex forms. This underscores the importance of Lenin's warning that "the art of administration does not descend from heaven, it is not inspired by the Holy Ghost." There are both objective and subjective factors that impede the rapid involvement of all the working people in the administration of the affairs of society. In the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, when the mass of the working people was illiterate and uninvolved in political life, Soviet power was government **in the interests** of these working people, governmental authority open to all working people. At this initial stage it could not yet be government **by these** working people.

Hence the emphasis Lenin placed on steadily wider involvement of the workers (in step with the rise in their cultural level) in the administration of the affairs of state. Under socialism, he said, it would be considered "a crime

The Soviets of People's Deputies are the political foundation of the Soviet Union, the main link in socialist self-government by the people. They have more than 2.3 million elected deputies and 30 million volunteer helpers.

for them not to take part in the work of management." The result of the low cultural level of the working people is, he pointed out in this connection, "that the Soviets, which by virtue of their programme are organs of government **by the working people,** are in fact organs of government **for the working people** by the advanced section of the proletariat, but not by the working people as a whole." The programme objective of making the Soviets organs of government not only for the working people but by the working people can be attained only with the victory of socialism, Lenin pointed out.

Towards Broader Socialist Self-Government

Inasmuch as, for many reasons—the illiteracy of part of the working people, the political inertia of the masses, etc.—the political power established in the process of the socialist revolution (the dictatorship of the proletariat) can in the initial period only be government **for,** not **by** the working people, Marx, Engels and Lenin considered transition to self-government by the working people to be the task of the proletariat from the moment of taking over power. "The substance of this idea they saw in ensuring the real, practical participation of ever greater numbers of working people in government—in the elaboration, discussion, adoption and implementation of socio-economic decisions," Mikhail Gorbachev has stressed.

In other words, while distinguishing between but not counterposing government **for the working people** (dictatorship of the proletariat) in the transition period and government **by the working people** (socialist popular self-government) under socialism, it must be borne in mind that in the case of government **by the working people** the decisive part of governmental functions is increasingly performed by the people **directly,** on their own initiative, not by proxy.

That government **by the working people** is in practical terms impossible is one of the most widespread and tenacious preconceived notions. Invoking the ever increasing complexity of administrative functions, the votaries of the bureaucratic dogmas of yesterday contend that the idea of the people governing themselves is a utopia that can never materialize.

It is in place to recall that when Russia was still a backward country Lenin wrote: "At all costs we must break the old, **absurd,** savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so-called 'upper classes,' only the rich, and those who have gone through the school of the rich, are capable of administering the state and directing the organizational development of socialist society." Emphasizing that this notion stemmed from confusing, deliberately or not, the expertise needed in decision-making at government level with the choice of what decisions to take—something which does not call for such expertise on the part of the masses—Lenin consistently stood for popular self-government.

Regarding government of the people by the people as a cardinal principle of socialism and seeing in its realization in practice the highroad to socialist democracy, the founders of scientific communism held that it could be given effect to in the new society through decentralization, self-government and the exercise of constant control by the masses over the activity of officeholders.

The key to defining the ways of achieving self-government by the people is the fundamental Marxist concept of the communist society as a union of the associations of producers comprising it. However, the Marxist-Leninist view on this question has in many respects been obscured by the accretions of long years of government **for the working people.** As for the opportunist concepts of "self-governing socialism" which ignore the role of the state, these have totally distorted the fundamental idea. Looking at the question in the light of socialist practice to date, I would say that the further development of socialist democracy, ever fuller socialist self-government by the people, will proceed along the following lines.

First. The direct participation of all in the administration of society is possible primarily within the framework of production (or territorial) collectives—meetings of the personnel of industrial enterprises, collective farms and institutions, village meetings, and the like. Because of this, Marx proceeded from the assumption that most everyday public problems would be decided by the community, the "association of producers," within which there is no delegating of authority. Inasmuch as the decisions are carried out by the working people themselves here, there are no "governors" and no "governed." "If a man has self-control, then according to this principle, he has no self-control, for he is only himself and nobody else," Marx observed. Sharing this view, Lenin predicted: "Under socialism much of 'primitive' democracy will inevitably be revived, since, for the first time in the history of civilized society, the mass of the population will rise to taking an independent part, not only in voting and elections, **but also in the everyday administration of the state.**"

The experience of the countries where socialism has become the practical reality has shown that there are a great many functions the working people can fully perform themselves, such as election of factory directors or collective farm chairmen, planning, deciding on the size of the work force needed, setting wage rates, distribution of profits, bonuses, housing, kindergarten and holiday home accommodations, and so on.

Second. Since direct participation in resolving the problems of everyday life is most practicable at grass-roots level, excessive centralization of administration is incompatible with government **by the working people.** Hence it is necessary to transfer administrative functions from the central bodies to the work collectives whenever this does not conflict with the interests of production and social progress.

This is precisely what underlies the legislative enactments widening the powers of work collectives and local government bodies that have been passed in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries (naturally in conformity with their specific conditions).

Third. The administrative functions of the working people cannot be confined to their particular factory, collective farm, institution, or rural locality. Hence collectives of working people and their mass organizations (e.g., trade unions and youth organizations) enjoy the right of political initiative on a countrywide scale in a number of socialist countries. All these are elements of social progress which, as Lenin said, "will create such conditions for the **majority** of the population as will enable **everybody,** without exception, to perform 'state functions.' "

Fourth. Government **by the people** remains a system of representative government. For it is essential to centralize the will of the millions and there are vital problems of a general nature that cannot be resolved simultaneously by all members of society. Marx wrote: "The few but important functions which still would remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as

has been intentionally mis-stated, but were to be discharged by Communal, and therefore strictly responsible agents."

With the steady widening of the scope of socialist popular self-government, this aspect of the political system also undergoes change. Officeholders are called upon not only to keep the people informed on all vital issues of state policy, not only to resolve such problems with the aid of the representatives of the working people, but also to take into account and, what is most important of all, to give expression to the opinion of the working people themselves, to act under their constant control.

Clearly, the realization of the principle of government **by the working people** in the context of perfecting socialism signifies the continued broadening of socialist democracy all the way to full socialist popular self-government, to administration of all public affairs not only in the interests of the people, but by the people themselves. Precisely this is envisaged in the draft of the new text of the CPSU Programme, which speaks not only of government in the interests of the working people but also of its logical, step-by-step evolution into the direct concern of the working people themselves.

In other words, socialist self-government is a form of government under which the functions of power delegated by the working people to their representatives will gradually pass into the hands of the working people themselves. This process will logically lead to the gradual disappearance of a special state machinery separate from society in general. In these circumstances representative democracy will increasingly give way to direct democracy. But this of course can happen only where and when the participation of all working people in the making and carrying out of decisions, in other words, in the administration of the affairs of society, has been basically ensured.

Our society has not yet arrived at that stage, though many tendencies in this direction are already making themselves tangibly felt. It is at this time of perfecting socialism, when society is still divided into classes, and politics and political power remain, that socialist popular self-government must be ensured. It differs from communist self-government in that it still is political in character. But already at the present stage a democratic system of government is taking shape which operates not only for the working people but increasingly by them.

It should be stressed that the CPSU regards the concept of socialist self-government by the people mainly as a guidepost in the further development of the Soviet political system and democracy. We must be on guard against losing sight of the full meaning of the concept, of the criteria of the difference between government **for the working people** and government **by them.** The criteria are clear-cut enough. An objective answer to the question whether a governmental power exercised in the name of the people is really government for the working people can be found by ascertaining whether it upholds the interests of the working people, how it distributes the national income, and what part of that income goes to satisfy the needs—both immediate and long-range—of the working people, with priority given to their vital interests. How these interests are reflected in state policy is something for the working people themselves to judge.

When it comes to establishing whether a given governmental authority is endowed with elements of popular self-government, the only objective criterion is who holds the reins of power, to what extent the working people exercise power functions themselves, not by proxy, and in what areas of public life and to what extent they take the final decisions (at enterprise level, on local scale, or on the national plane). Equally indicative of the extent to which government **for the working people** has developed into government **by the working people,** in other words, has evolved into popular self-government, is the number of working people involved in taking final decisions on vital issues as well as the scale on which governmental functions are performed directly by them. From this it follows that the way to communist popular self-government lies through the further development of all these aspects, through full socialist self-government by the people. ■

Ragep Duran is not a newcomer to journalism: he has published several books on politics in Turkey and in the West, works with the BBC and is London correspondent for the Istanbul-based Cumhuriyet, which carried his reports from Afghanistan.

Duran did not use the opportunity the Afghan government offered journalists to get their information legally but, like some of his Western colleagues, decided to enter Afghanistan illegally, by the "back door."

First, he went as a correspondent to Pakistan, where he was given the attire of a "mujahid" (an "Islamic freedom-fighter," as the dushmans call themselves) and told to pretend to be a deaf-mute when crossing the border. Duran knew, of course, that what he was doing was illegal.

The journalist found himself in a group of "volunteers" from a number of Moslem countries who had arrived to help the "jihad," or holy war. "Do you know what jihad is?" he was asked at the camp by one of his companions, a member of the extremist Right-wing organization calling itself the Muslim Brothers. The man went on to expound a "programme," which had little to do with events in Afghanistan. "The jihad in Afghanistan is the war waged by the whole of the Moslem world," he said "It influences people in Algeria, Egypt, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. If, God willing, we win the war in Afghanistan, the victory will spark off a similar jihad in our own countries as well...."

Duran is a practising Moslem but, as he showed no sympathy for the discourses of his "brother," the man began to look at him suspiciously.

Duran's impressions of the camp could not have been worse. It was insanitary and miserable, though substantial funds are known to have been appropriated for training and equipment. Duran is doubtful as to the selflessness of the Pakistani authorities, who are fond of talking about "care for Afghan refugees," from amongst whom "Islamic fighters" are recruited. "After endless red tape, the Pakistani government began to give daily relief to the value of 4 rupees, but only to those who had procured official papers showing their refugee status." By way of comparison, Duran paid a Pakistani policeman 50 rupees as he was crossing the border so that the man would not ask him for his papers. Duran came to the conclusion that only those in the refugee camps who offered their services to the dushman leaders could hope for help.

A Turkish journalist's reports in the Istanbul Cumhuriyet show the growing demoralization and disarray in the counterrevolutionary camp and the hopelessness of the undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

A TURK'S CLOSE-UP OF THE DUSHMANS

The leaders of the counterrevolution, however, can count less and less on the loyalty of their minions. One of them told the Turkish journalist: "People can cross over to the other side... Some of them do, refusing to support us." The tendency is gaining momentum despite the repression and intimidation practised by the Pakistani authorities and terrorist chiefs.

Duran's reports also inadvertently refute the allegations of Western and Pakistani propaganda that dushmans are welcome in Afghan villages. According to Duran, Kabul's good-will policy towards the Moslem clergy and, above all, its socio-economic policies, such as land and water reform, and efforts to eradicate illiteracy, are yielding fruit. People in some villages, he said, fear those who keep their children away from school as if they were dushman supporters.

Counterrevolution, the Turkish journalist says, is losing its social base while the revolutionary government, despite the undeclared war waged by imperialist and reactionary forces, is growing stronger. Another important conclusion prompted by Duran's observations is that the counterrevolutionary groups are becoming demoralized.

Peshawar, the administrative centre of the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan, bordering on Afghanistan, is "the political headquarters of the jihad," the Turkish journalist says. It is there that the anti-Afghan bandit organizations have their headquarters. But their ringleaders, according to Duran, are divided by personal grudges, tribal strife and religious, ideological and, of course, political differences. He says: "When the tape recorder was on, they addressed each other as representatives of 'fraternal organizations' but as soon as I switched it off, the truth emerged. They would immediately start to berate rival groups and claim that they alone were 'true fighters.' "

Duran failed to find in any of the counterrevolutionary groupings a distinct programme with clear-cut objectives worth fighting for so fiercely.

Most of the Afghan people have made their historic choice, giving their support to the people's democratic revolution, and are defending its achievements against imperialism and those who serve it. The Afghan revolution is irreversible. Though the Turkish journalist's world outlook inhibits such an admission, he does say: "The Karmal regime is scoring points."

The Turkish correspondent points out that developments are being influenced by regional and international as well as by local factors. Duran says: "In Islamabad, Pakistani opposition figures told me that, thanks to the war in Afghanistan, General Zia ul-Haq has established in the country a regime to his liking and is getting substantial military aid from abroad...." Does Islamabad have an interest in a successful outcome to the Afghan-Pakistani talks on the normalization of the situation in the region, conducted in Geneva through U.N. mediation? The journalist is in no doubt: "General Zia ul-Haq does not relish the prospect of an end to the war and that is why at the Geneva talks the Pakistani foreign minister continues to insist that the Kabul regime cannot be recognized." There is one more factor explaining Islamabad's stand: the Zia ul-Haq regime is earning substantial dividends on the Afghan war, including high "commission fees," Duran stresses, as foreign "aid" to the dushmans goes through Islamabad.

The Turkish correspondent has little sympathy for the Afghan revolution and has never shed the stereotypes of Western propaganda, but as a journalist he could not fail to see through the masks of those who are inspiring and fighting the gory "jihad" against the Afghan revolution. He has also realized that this ruthless "undeclared" war against a people which has awakened to a new life is hopeless.

Y. GAVRILOV and S. TARASOV

Drilling minors in a dushman camp.

Photo from Der Spiegel (F.R.G.)

IN THE SHADOW OF NATO

ANATOLY KRASIKOV

On March 12 Spaniards will vote in a referendum—repeatedly promised and put off— as to whether their country should remain in NATO. Parliament has endorsed, and the King signed, the text of the decree to be put before the electorate. Printed in the government Boletin Oficial on February 7, the decree reads:

"The government deems it expedient for Spain to stay on in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization from the viewpoint of national interests on the stipulation that:

"1. Spain's membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization shall not presuppose its joining the integrated military structure of NATO.

"2. The ban on the deployment and storage of nuclear weapons and on their delivery onto Spanish territory shall remain in force.

"3. The United States shall begin a gradual reduction of its military presence in Spain.

"Question: Do you agree with Spain staying on in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on the conditions stipulated by the national government?"

An official political campaign in the course of which all parties are to take their stands on the matter will start two weeks before the referendum and come to an end at midnight on March 11, i.e., exactly 24 hours before the voting begins. The issue, however, has been under discussion for quite some time now, and a clear cross-section of public opinion on it has emerged.

The U.S. has always regarded Spain as a country which should be in its military and political orbit, helping to pursue Washington's anti-Soviet and anti-communist policy. In 1957 the U.S. Congress insisted that the State Department should have Spain join NATO. However, the capitalist world's leading power had to reckon with its allies in the bloc, and the governments of most West European countries could not then consent to Spain's admission to NATO: they had to reckon with their peoples' hostile attitudes to the fascist regime.

So the Pentagon had to content itself with bilateral military agreements with Franco. Under an agreement signed on September 26, 1953, the U.S. pledged itself to render the fascist dictator aid in military supplies and secured the right to keep and use for military purposes, jointly with the government of Spain, bases on Spanish territory manned by American army and civilian personnel. Prolonged in 1963 and 1970, the agreement was replaced after the caudillo's death by a treaty of friendship and cooperation (1976). The new bilateral accord entitled U.S. armed forces to continue using the air bases in Torrejon near Madrid, in Moron and in the vicinity of Saragossa, the naval base in Rota near Cadiz, seven radar stations and twenty other military installations scattered all over Spanish territory.

No Neutralism

The Madrid weekly Cambio 16 pointed out that the American's chief concern was then to prevent Spain from changing over to a neutral foreign policy. "Their No. 1 task is to block, with might and main, the process of normalization in international relations. Regardless of what is more acceptable to the government in Madrid, the United States would not put up with a Mediterranean Switzerland," the weekly stated at the time.

According to the same magazine, Robert Gahagen, a CIA resident, and his men became extremely active in Spain. Gahagen's team, the weekly reported, kept in touch with a wide range of Spanish politicians—from die-hard Francoists of the "bunker," as Franco's retinue was called, to opposition leaders. Many of these people paid regular visits to the U.S. embassy in Madrid, others preferred to meet their American contacts elsewhere. A few years later this practice ensued in a flow of invitations to prominent politicians, independent journalists and moderate opposition leaders to visit the United States as part of the international "visitation programme." Although all the invitations were issued in the name of the U.S. ambassador, Gahagen and his men were involved in keeping up contacts and selecting prospective visitors.

If the New York Times is to be believed, the CIA handed over millions of dollars to groups of Portuguese politicians who had close connections in Spain. A part of these funds was delivered through channels the CIA had established in the socialist parties of certain West European countries. Cambio 16 notes that the United States runs vast military training and cooperation programmes and, according to well-informed sources, tries to use these programmes to make useful contacts amongst the influential Spanish military and help them up the scale of rank in every way. If the moderates suffer a setback, or if the changeover to democracy goes too far, the Americans always know which of the military to bring into play, the magazine observes.

During his first official visit to the United States in June 1976, King Juan Carlos, the new head of the Spanish state, made an attempt to explain to American leaders his plans for changing the regime and to talk Washington out of interfering with the restoration of democracy in Spain. Addressing those who like to dictate to sovereign foreign states, the King stressed that he would not permit any external interference or pressure. "The cooperation which Spain is earnestly striving for," he added, "must develop with full respect for the nation's sovereignty and dignity." At the same time the King assured his American hosts that the change in the Spanish system of government would not impinge upon U.S. interests. Speaking in the U.S. Congress, he said that he would always make a special point of being ready "to share with the United States responsibility for common security—given the strict observance of the principles of sovereignty and reciprocity."

Washington had to shelve for a while its plans to draw Spain into NATO. Adolfo Suarez, the new head of government, was not in a hurry to hitch his country to the American war chariot. Interviewed by a correspondent of the Madrid paper Pais, he stressed that "the question of Spanish membership of NATO is neither urgent nor immediate."

"My government has set itself the task of pressing for the drawing closer

together of all nations and states regardless of their social system," Adolfo Suarez told me. "Nobody among us ever thought of denying Spain's belonging to the West. But this did not prevent us from striving for normal relations with all countries. Spain proved that civil peace, the coexistence and competition of various political tendencies within the framework of a single state are quite possible. More important is to learn not to switch ideological disputes into channels of military confrontation in international affairs."

Later Adolfo Suarez returned to this subject as he talked with a correspondent of the Madrid weekly Interviu. He told the newsman unambiguously that

Anti-NATO demonstrators clash with police in Madrid.

TASS photo

as the head of government he was against Spain being aligned with any military bloc. "It is easier to decide to stay away from NATO, as I have done, than to decide to withdraw from it," Adolfo Suarez stated. "I realize that such a withdrawal would involve no few difficulties but would give us certain advantages nevertheless." "When I was in office, Spain's foreign policy was consistent," the ex-premier added. "That was a policy of independence. And I take pride in having pursued this policy, with all its merits and demerits."

General Manuel Gutierrez Mellado, a close friend of the former premier and his deputy in charge of military affairs, took a similar view. "We both agreed," he said in 1983, "that having managed without NATO for nearly thirty years Spain could go on doing so, at least in the foreseeable future."

Such a philosophy was certainly unacceptable to the American hawks. These ill-starred crusaders rejected whatever failed to fit into their stereotypes. Therefore, the Suarez government's attempts, timid and not always consistent as they were, to establish friendly relations with any state willing to cooperate caused mistrust and suspicion in Washington.

The Barons' Revolt

According to Josep Mella, one of the Premier's closest political associates, "Adolfo Suarez made a serious mistake when he thought that Spain could pursue an independent foreign policy while remaining in the Western camp. But it was Suarez who was the first to be made to pay for showing where exactly the Gordian knot of the balance of forces in the world is located."

Subsequently, events developed extremely fast. In 1981 a "barons' revolt" within his own party compelled Adolfo Suarez to step down. That was followed by an abortive attempt at a military fascist putsch. (A little later Felipe Gonzalez, Secretary-General of the Socialist Workers' Party of Spain, told a press conference he possessed information about the putschists' contacts with representatives of the Reagan Administration which had just come to power in the U.S.) Right after the suppression of the putschists' venture, the government headed by Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo took over in Madrid. At the end of the same year it pushed through the Cortes a resolution in favour of Spain joining NATO. In May 1982 Spain was officially proclaimed a member of the North Atlantic bloc.

As early as that, the Left-wing parties demanded that the government hold a referendum so that all Spaniards could have their say on this important matter. The pro-Atlanticists then in power rejected the demand outright. This was not surprising: public opinion polls conducted by all sorts of specialized institutions had always shown that the overwhelming majority of Spaniards had no wish to get into the NATO trap.

The Socialist Workers' Party of Spain (SWPS) joined the majority of the nation in its opposition to acceding to the North Atlantic bloc. So when a breakdown of the cabinet majority compelled L. Calvo Sotelo to call preterm parliamentary elections, the Socialists conducted their election campaign under the "Withdraw from NATO" slogan. Addressing a Madrid press conference, Felipe Gonzalez, the SWPS leader, levelled sharp criticism at all the actions taken since 1953, describing them as "a gradual sale of Spain's sovereignty." "We shall defend our independence by all means," he stressed.

It follows from the decree quoted at the beginning of this article that the SWPS's official position has changed by now. Following their election victory in October 1982, the Socialists have come around to a different view and now no longer object to Spain remaining a member of the North Atlantic bloc. They are prepared to restrict themselves to non-integration into NATO's military organization, to the confirmation of Spain's non-nuclear status (secured by Adolfo Suarez), and to taking note of the U.S. promise to negotiate a reduction in the personnel at U.S. military bases on Spanish soil.

Trying to justify the change in his position, Felipe Gonzalez told the Congress of Deputies early this February there were "weighty reasons for that." "Upsetting Spain's present position in the North Atlantic alliance," he said, "would mean injuring ourselves and causing unpredictable consequences."

Felipe Gonzalez did not explain who would have injured him had the SWPS retained its former stance as regards NATO. Neither did he elaborate on the "unpredictable consequences" of a break with the North Atlantic bloc. No one in Madrid speaks about this openly today. Public discussion is given only to "problems" in Spain's relations with EEC member states, "problems" that it is claimed might arise in the event of Spain's withdrawal from NATO (although Spain's alignment with NATO has nothing to do, formally or otherwise, with its membership of the EEC). It is also alleged that the withdrawal will dim the prospects of Gibraltar being returned to Spain by Britain, which captured it in the early 18th century (incidentally, these prospects did not become any brighter after 1982 when both claimants to Gibraltar found themselves in the same military alliance).

In private talks Spanish politicians who prefer to remain anonymous shift the emphasis to something else. They point to Spain's virtual dependence on transnational corporations which as a rule have their headquarters in the U.S. Indeed, since Franco had flung the doors of his country wide open to foreign capital (North American included), the transnationals had infiltrated the Spanish economy on an ever larger scale. Similar processes are to be observed in other industrialized countries as well, but the situation in Spain looks especially acute. Over the centuries it has jealously guarded its

independence and has never been under foreign domination (except for a few years under Napoleon).

It is an open secret that the White House and the Pentagon are in a position to bring strong pressure to bear on Spanish politicians through their men in the armed forces, political parties, trade unions and the mass media. A recent case in point is the scandal which arose last January after a transfer of funds by the American Endowment for Democracy to a Spanish trade union organization had become public knowledge. In February the Madrid magazine Interviu reported that Catalonian neofascists had formed special units of storm-troopers assigned to mingle with Left-wing and pacifist demonstrations to provoke clashes with police and cause public disturbances. This activity, the magazine writes, is generously paid for by those interested in weakening and suppressing progressive organizations, primarily those who campaign for peace and favour the country's withdrawal from NATO and the closing down of American military bases on Spanish territory.

Relations between Madrid and the North Atlantic bloc have been the subject of a series of negotiations between representatives of Spain and NATO countries over the past few years. President Reagan contributed in his own way to the campaign to bring Spain and NATO closer together. He was the fifth American President to pay an official visit to Madrid (May 1985). However, Reagan was in for an unpleasant surprise. Nearly a million Spaniards took to the streets to voice their protest against NATO's aggressive policy and to demand the closing down of the U.S. bases. The demonstrators included representatives of 50 Left-wing parties and public organizations, including even the Socialist-controlled General Union of the Working People and the Socialist Youth Organization. They were determined, France-Presse reported, "to make Mr Reagan's European tour, already marred by the incidents in the F.R.G., a veritable Calvary."

On the eve of the visit the newspaper Pais published the results of a public opinion poll, which revealed that 74 per cent of Spaniards regarded the current American leadership's official policy as contrary to the interests of peace, and 64 per cent did not believe the U.S. and its President to be "loyal and sincere friends of Spain."

The Bases

It was reported that Felipe Gonzalez assured Reagan of the Spanish government's intention to have Spaniards reconsider their anti-NATO attitude so that the country could stay on in the bloc. For his part Reagan—considering the difficulties the head of the Spanish government was up against—consented to negotiations to reduce the personnel at U.S. military bases in Spain.

Two rounds of negotiations—the idea for which had been put forward by Felipe Gonzalez a few months earlier—were held in Madrid in October and December 1985. They brought no results. The newspaper Pais summed up the American position: "The U.S.A. is against the reduction of its presence in Spain." News analysts stated in this connection that, by consenting to the negotiations, Reagan by no means provided a guarantee of U.S. armed forces in Spain actually being reduced.

The Popular Alliance, backed by all the Right-wing parties, objects to even a partial withdrawal of American troops from Spain, and demands that the country stay in NATO and be fully integrated into its military organization. They regard the Gonzalez referendum as a fraud because, whatever the result, it will leave Spain outside NATO's integrated military structure. For this reason Manuel Fraga Iribarne, leader of the Alliance and an ex-Francoist minister, is calling on the people to boycott the March 12 voting.

The Right-wingers' die-hard attitude has caused anxiety in Right-wing conservative quarters in other Western countries. At the meetings held by a number of North Atlantic Assembly bodies in Brussels on February 14, it was repeatedly stated that the boycott of the referendum insisted on by the Popular Alliance and other such Spanish organizations might cause the defeat of the government in which case Spain would be lost not only to NATO's military organization, but to the North Atlantic bloc as a whole.

According to the EFE agency, Sir Patrick Wall, a British Conservative, "clutched at his head" upon learning that the Popular Alliance had called on voters to boycott the referendum. Ton Frinkin, a Dutch Christian Democrat, suggested that his colleagues put joint pressure on Spain's Right-wing parties so that they back Gonzalez. Lord Carrington, NATO Secretary-General, who went to Madrid on an official visit early this year, spoke in the same vein. For his part, Jaime de Ojeda, Madrid's ambassador to NATO, hastened to assure participants in the discussion that the "Spanish government will win the referendum."

In the meantime, preparations for the referendum are nearing completion. The forthcoming propaganda campaign will be conducted under the SWPS-approved slogan "In the Interests of Spain, Vote FOR." Having secured the party leadership's support for his new line with regard to NATO, Felipe Gonzalez sought to win the whole of the party over to his side.

Left-wing Socialists held out longest but in the end they, too, promised not to vote against, although, as Castellano, a leader of the Left-wing Socialists, remarked: "Many would like to say Yes to Gonzalez, No to NATO." The Socialist leaders proceeded to the next stage on February 15-16 when they began to publish their appeals in the press in the ads columns and to put up street posters. Preparations for the referendum will enter the final stage on February 25, the opening day of the official political campaign which is to culminate on March 10 in a mass meeting with Felipe Gonzalez attending.

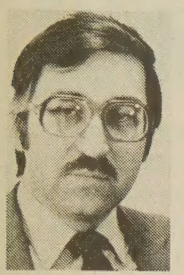
As we have seen, Spanish political opinion is divided on the NATO issue. The Right-wing parties, demanding Spain's 100 per cent participation in NATO and displeased with the concession Felipe Gonzalez is prepared to make to the Spaniards, are calling to boycott the referendum; the Socialist leaders have swung from an anti- to a pro-NATO stand (though with certain reservations); and finally, the remaining Left-wing forces, including the Communist Party of Spain, the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain, the trade unions and numerous peace organizations, believe they have scored the first success in compelling the government to fulfil, at long last, its promise to hold the referendum, and say a firm No to any ties with NATO.

Now the electorate will have the final say.

TAKING UP A POINT

You, meaning the Soviet press and not least New Times, miss no opportunity of criticizing the capitalist world and accusing developed Western countries of enslaving the developing states economically and politically. But do we not find a mirror image of this in Soviet policy with regard, say, to Mongolia, which seems to be completely dependent on the U.S.S.R.?

Gregory GOLDSMITH
New Orleans, U.S.A.



New Times staff writer VLADIMIR GODYNA replies:

Having read this letter I must emphasize that it seems to me to be prompted by distorted ideas of both Mongolia and the U.S.S.R., and of relations between socialist countries in general. I cannot claim to be surprised as these views are foisted on the public by the Western mass media.

But let us try to cast aside false Western propaganda stereotypes.

Those who claim that Mongolia is not an independent country cite the fact that its roads are full of Soviet-made cars; that many Mongolians are fluent in Russian ... and so on. I could add more facts of the same kind. During my recent trip across Mongolia I met my fellow Soviet citizens in rural backwaters helping Mongolian farmers to master modern agricultural machinery, and at urban factories and construction sites where they work and share their expertise with their Mongolian colleagues. This is how the Soviet Union is "enslaving" Mongolia.

Talking more seriously, what are the results of Soviet participation in Mongolia's affairs? Does it serve her well or ill?

Let us think back to the early and, for Mongolia, most difficult years, the 1920s. The country did not even have its own national currency unit. The third decade of our century found Mongolia enslaved and crippled by external debt. Imperialist states were freely exploiting Mongolia's national resources and hampering its economic development. The people's government immediately set about putting things in order: it cancelled the debts to foreign firms, introduced restrictions on foreign capital, strengthened the national consumer cooperatives and streamlined the state budget.

I make no secret of the fact that all these changes were carried out with the active and disinterested assistance of the Soviet Union. The new government's measures to annull debts to foreign moneylenders and merchants, the introduction of customs and of sovereignty over natural resources, the establishment of a national fiscal, credit and commercial system, the creation and strengthening of state and cooperative industry—these were crucial to the ousting of foreign commercial and credit capital, which had for centuries been an instrument of plunder, and to creating the conditions for the emergence of an independent national economy. Our country would never have assisted in that if it had had the enslavement of Mongolia in mind.

Take another example. The Mongolian Commercial-Industrial Bank (Mongolbank) set up on a joint-stock basis with the assistance of the Soviet Union. There are those who wrongly hasten to interpret this as proof of the allegation that Moscow is siphoning off the national riches of its partners through joint ventures. More than three decades ago, when Mongolbank stood on its own feet and became an important factor in international economic ties, the U.S.S.R. handed over its shares in the enterprise to the Mongolian People's Republic. Are there similar examples to be found in relations between advanced capitalist and developing countries? It is vain to search. There are none. Just as there are no examples of soft-term credits at 0.5-1 per cent interest, as the Soviet Union is offering Mongolia. On top of that, the U.S.S.R. offers bonuses on contract prices for some of the goods it imports. The aim is to give a fillip to this or that branch of the economy in the fraternal country.

So, the economic development of people's Mongolia, which incidentally involved Soviet assistance in the building of 600-odd enterprises in key industries, is an example of how socialism makes it possible for less developed countries to catch up with advanced countries. If the same thing were true of the West's relations with developing countries, it is unlikely that they would now be weighed down with debts and complaining about debilitating price differentials and protectionism.

We in the Soviet Union, of course, are happy at the successes of socialist Mongolia because we claim some of the credit for them and because we have every grounds for saying that Soviet participation in Mongolia's affairs coincides with its national interests.

I have devoted most of my reply to the economic aspect. It is usually accepted that an independent national economy is a guarantee of the political independence of any country. And the socialist integration and cooperation in which Mongolia is actively involved contribute towards achieving that twin objective. So there are no grounds for talking about Mongolia as a "political vassal," either. Our countries agree and coordinate foreign policy. And "agreement" is not a synonym for "dependence."

Mongolia is the author of several peace-making initiatives. It has made such major moves as proposing a convention on non-aggression and the non-use of force in relations among the Asian and Pacific countries, and has proposed recognizing and legally enshrining in law the right of nations to peace, which has gained wide international support and has provided the basis for a corresponding U.N. declaration.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the following fact: Mongolia has in recent years played host to two United Nations seminars for developing countries. Their themes were "The Role of New Theoretical Concepts in the Development Process" and "Alternative Roads of Development for Developing Countries and the Mongolian Experience." It is not for nothing that Third World countries who are seeking a new and equitable economic order attach such importance to the rich experience of Mongolia, which has rejected the capitalist option in its social and economic development. That gives food for thought. ■

PS POSTSCRIPT

Refuted

After talks with Greek leaders, John Whitehead, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, said they had acknowledged Libya's involvement in the incidents in Vienna and Rome. However, the bubble soon burst. A spokesman for the Greek government declared that at no time had any Greek official admitted that Gaddafi was involved in terrorist actions.

"Freedom of the Press"

The West German Hamburger Morgenpost tells us that a manual for would-be suicides, compiled by Yves Le Ronniec and Claude Guillon, came out in an edition of 100,000 copies in France alone, besides being translated into nine other languages. All attempts to stop the book circulating failed, with authors and publishers invoking "freedom of the press." However, recently Yves Le Ronniec was arrested, sued by the relatives of two young suicides. By the side of their dead bodies police had found not only the fateful handbook, but also a letter from Ronniec explaining how much poison was required and how it should be taken. No allusions to the "freedom of the press" could justify that.

Where the Money Came From

The Israeli authorities, to put paid to the notion that the country is chronically insolvent and depends entirely on the U.S. for support, ostentatiously presented $51 million to Washington as their contribution to bridging the U.S. federal budget's $200-billion deficit. They openly admitted that the money came from the $3 billion Washington had given Israel in the current fiscal year in economic and military aid.

Way Below the Minimum

Soon after McDonald's opened its first fast food restaurant in Mexico City, it had to close down following local trade union protest. The American company was underpaying its Mexican personnel, whose take-home wage was far below the very modest Mexican legal minimum.

Some Excuse!

To curry favour with Washington, the government of Dominica has decided to refuse jobs to young graduates of Cuban universities. The Prime Minister has likewise decreed that employment be denied to graduates of universities and colleges in other socialist countries. When asked why, Prime Minister Mary Eugenia Charles said these institutions of higher learning taught nothing but doctrines of Marxism-Leninism.

Stinkpot Boomerang

Jack Roberts, anchorman of the local radio station in Bangor, Maine, U.S.A., contributed his two bits' worth to Washington's anti-Libyan campaign when he asked listeners to mail parcels of garbage to Libya's U.N. mission. Several days later, to his own amazement, there was one hell of a stink at his own radio station from parcels listeners sent him in protest against his anti-Libyan provocation, the Spanish newspaper El Pais reports.

Putting on the Squeeze

"Reagan is putting the squeeze on Mexico's President de la Madrid. He's demanding that Mexico join in opposing Nicaragua's Marxist regime before Washington will grant $4.1 billion in new loans and ease entry of Mexican goods to the U.S.," the U.S. News and World Report noted on January 27. No comment needed.

Shoulder Rat

Zurich's gilded youth, the Belgian newspaper Le Soir reports, have adopted the novel American fashion of walking not with a dog on a leash, but with a tame rat on their shoulders. The town fathers are worried as rat bites are not only painful, but can also serve to spread contagious diseases.

Tons of Heroin

In recent years the drug traffic in the West has assumed colossal proportions, the commission of inquiry into drug addiction in EEC countries notes in a press bulletin released in Brussels. In the first ten months of 1985, over five tons of heroin and nearly 16.5 tons of cocaine were sequestered by the police, and 3,500 drug smugglers were apprehended. The chief of the Interpol drug squad says his organization does not foresee any improvement, for the next ten years at least.

Drawings by V. Rozantsev

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JOBS AND JUSTICE!

The place: a small resort town in the south of the Federal Republic of Germany. The time: the last days of 1985. Among the throngs of Xmas shoppers I did not notice him at first. He was sitting on the sidewalk, leaning against the show window of a large supermarket. On his chest was a neatly written sign: "I have no work, no money, nowhere to live." His hat stood on the ground beside him. How did he come to be there in this idyllic, picture-postcard town given over to opulent tourists and mountain skiing enthusiasts?

"It is strange," agreed the young owner of a prospering firm who was giving me a lift to the hotel in his brand-new Mercedes. "You usually see these idlers in the industrial centres. There are plenty of them there."

True enough, in the big cities, and not only in the F.R.G., you do see more of them. Down-and-outs, like the one outside the supermarket, or else with a hurdy-gurdy or drawing pictures with coloured crayons on the floors of underpasses. The madonnas and exotic birds and animals are soon obliterated by the feet of the indifferent crowd, and the pavement artist sets to work again.

The reasoning of the employer is simple: if a person has no money and nowhere to live that means he does not want to work, he is a loafer. Statistics tell us exactly how many such "loafers" there are in the F.R.G.— 2,600,000 is the figure for January. The vast majority of them are people ready to mine coal, operate a machine tool, drive a truck, teach school, or work as postman, to do any kind of work. But the fate of the unemployed does not concern the occupants of luxurious villas, the owners of yachts and brand-new Mercedes cars. The existence of a reserve army of labour is to their advantage. It makes it easier for them to keep in hand those who have not yet been laid off, to extract ever bigger profits from them.

In the West the capitalists are euphemistically called employers. According to bourgeois logic, the working people ought to be grateful to them for providing jobs. But the days are gone when workingmen could be taken in by juggling with words. In the F.R.G. the pitch of class battles is rising. In early February the country was swept by a powerful wave of demonstrations and strikes, the number of strikers running to the hundreds of thousands. The working class demands jobs and social justice.

There is no "class peace" in other capitalist countries either. In France (3 million jobless) miners in the central coalfields staged a 24-hour strike and agricultural labourers struck work in the Indre department. In the U.S. (8 million unemployed) West Virginia miners were on strike for more than a year. And the miners of the Phelps Dodge copper mining company of Arizona have been on the picket lines for more than two and a half years.

The picture above was taken in Spain, where more than 2,000 workers are laid off every day. All told, the country has some 3 million jobless. "What rights does an unemployed have?" writes the Spanish Tiempo journal. "The only right he has is to commit suicide." The Spanish media frequently carry reports of the tragedies of those who have exercised this right. But there is another way out—proletarian solidarity and struggle. That way has been chosen by millions.

N. ZHOLKVER